messing about in BOATS

Special Features This Issue
Four Fabulous Florida Flings
By Sail, Oar & Paddle

Volume 29 – Number 2

June 2011

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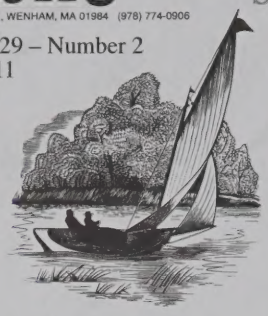

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Editor and Publisher: Bob Hicks
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For subscription or circulation inquiries or problems, contact:
Jane Hicks at
maib.office@gmail.com

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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

Didja catch that alliteration on the cover? I've always been susceptible to that sort of word manipulation and the fact that four readers sent me tales of their Florida adventures this past winter found me seizing the opportunity to indulge this whimsical mindset when casting about to properly entitle them as a group. I almost added on anther word, inserting "Fantastic" after "Four," but no, let's not overdo this, I told myself.

None of the four were year-round residents of Florida, nor seasonal, all traveled south on vacations. Tom Willey drove down from North Carolina towing his 14' sharpie for his 11 days afloat in and around Everglades National Park. He was accompanied by a long-time friend in a borrowed 16' sea kayak. Interesting combo, pretty much traveling separately each day but rejoining at day's end at predetermined overnight stopping places.

Husband and wife Hugh and Louise McManus from Connecticut and father and son Stan and Eric Kruzewski from Massachusetts paddled double kayaks cartopped to Florida on their separate outings. The McManus' picked up where they had left off the year before near Silver Springs (see "The Silver River" in the May issue) and went on to the Keys eventually, with some overland travel from spot to spot to position themselves. Stan and Eric visited 12 parks in Florida on both east and west coasts and one in coastal Georgia on the way home, jumping from place to place over the road.

John Depa got in "deepa," he left New Jersey over the road on January 5 trailering his 19' West Wight Potter, put in at Everglades City and soloed along the west coast for almost three months, returning home on April 1. A few years ago John sailed from his New Jersey home to Florida, across the state to the west coast, then back to the east and off to the Bahamas, all solo in that same Potter. At one point in his narrative, John mentioned that he didn't seem to have any friends, but immediately qualified that remark with, "who enjoy long distance sailing in a small boat." So he goes alone happily enough.

So you get 14 pages all about winter messing about in sunny, warm Florida in this issue, perhaps a bit more concentration on adventuring afloat in one place than we normally include in an issue.

I was interested to note in John Depa's narrative his alluding to Peter Matthiessen's book, *Killing Mr. Watson*, when visiting the Watson place not far from Everglades City. This engrossing tale of the mysterious appearance of a Mr Watson at Everglades City around the turn of the 20th century and the ensuing impact he had on that area, culminating in his murder by unidentified locals, is a great read for anyone having more than passing interest in how Florida came to be developed as the railroads moved south.

Florida has its charms, no doubt, not only for those who live there year-round but also for seasonal visitors from the north. A number of readers regularly commute seasonally from our frozen north to Florida each winter, judging from the address changes we make to assure they continue getting the magazine. Others do the holiday tripping described in the four tales in this issue. But not me.

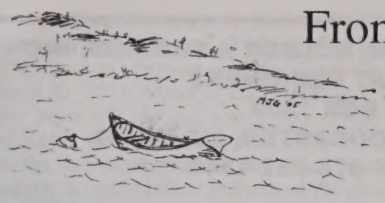
I was last in Florida in 1968 during my motorcycle magazine days, annually going to Daytona Beach for the big motorcycle race held there each March. Our first trip in 1960 was in February before the races were moved off the beach to the new Speedway and ahead a month seeking warmer weather. "This is SUNNY FLORIDA?" we exclaimed, still wearing the same winter coats we had started south in from a snowy Massachusetts. Realizing that Daytona was not really heartland Florida, we did some tourist stuff in subsequent years down towards Lake Okeechobee and Miami and over to Bradenton/St Pete.

Flat, flat, flat. Sandy sandy, sandy, puckerbrush everywhere. The big Disney tourist trap hadn't been built yet but we did take in the Silver Springs water skiing show and glass bottomed boat rides scene. After nine years it was enough, we've never been back. Because I was not doing small boats during that era of my life I had no conception of what sort of a small boating place it might be.

In the early years of publishing *MAIB* we began hearing from a Mac McCarthy from the Sarasota area, who was building small stripper Wee Lassie type boats and extolling the beauty and clarity of the area's rivers, we read of his passion for getting on them in his own little boats and observing the fascinating wildlife to be found on and around them. For over a dozen years Mac was a regular contributor to these pages. We just learned that Mac has passed away (see "You write to us about..." in this issue). It would have been nice to have visited Mac and paddled with him but we just never ever did get further south again than St Michaels, Maryland.

On the Cover...

Tom Willey's 14' sharpie, *Jennifer Gayle*, "low and dry" on a mudflat at Pavilion Key in Florida's Everglades National Park on his 11-day adventure afloat in that small boating paradise. Tom's tale is one of four similar tales of adventures undertaken by readers this past winter in that area, all featured in this issue.



From the Journals of Constant Waterman

By Matthew Goldman
(Stonington, Connecticut)

Once ashore, I decide to walk to Gosnold's Tower at the west extreme of the island. Bartholomew Gosnold settled Cuttyhunk in 1602. In 1902, the islanders built this tower in commemoration. It is visible from sea and from the hilltop above the village but, otherwise, is rather isolated.

Beyond the village, the road despairs of paving; there is only one house, at present, out on these moors. I come to a fork in the road and take the right turning. Not the correct turning, but the right one. The road devolves to a cart track, then to a path. It wends amid salt marsh grass beside a tidal pond. The mud sucks at my sneakers and I keep to the higher verge. A dinghy and a canoe recline on their gunwales above high water. I come to a natural breachway, the tide tearing into the pond, and decide I need at least two jumps to clear it. There is the tower before me but no one told me it lives on its own little island. I could borrow a boat, but there aren't any oars or paddles. I return to the fork and traverse the far way around.

The left fork is dry and hard and follows the brow of the bluff above the sea. I come to outbuildings and then to the last, the only house, at this end of the island. At this season, I find it deserted. Beyond the open gate, the road is merely a grassy track. It takes me down beside the sea. A deer trail climbs among thickets and wildflowers onto an arm of land surrounding the pond. Cadaverous utility poles with antique insulators stagger beside the track. Dangling remnants of wire sway with the breeze.

I find myself nearer the tower and surrounded by old structures. A cellar hole with a leveled chimney gapes beside the path. A circular foundation, now filled with browning Queen Anne's lace, testifies to a lighthouse long defunct. Its replacement is a rusty tower bearing aloft a reflector.

At the end of the trail stands a tiny cobblestone hut; perhaps the light keeper's cottage. Waist high brush grows tight against the walls. Each of the double-pitched gables has a slatted, wooden ventilator, but circulation has ceased to be a problem, the wooden roof has long since fallen in. The doorway casement records the carving of lovers, but I can't find a date going back more than thirty years. The door has disappeared. Eight feet wide and nine feet long, the cottage hasn't a window. The pargeting inside crumbles away. Broken rafters quietly rot on the floor. Deadly nightshade creeps across the threshold.

The northeast wind attempts to rip off my jacket. The surf attacks the shore. Herds of white horses gallop down the length of Buzzards Bay. By nightfall, the horses will grow even more rambunctious. Across the bay to the north lies the dim and evasive coast of Massachusetts. Rumor has it they tried a settlement there, but it never succeeded.

The door and narrow windows of cobblestone Gosnold's Tower are sealed with mortar. The tower is slim and round; its low-pitched, conical roof perches seventy feet above its tiny isle. I can't read the plaque with binoculars from a hundred feet away.

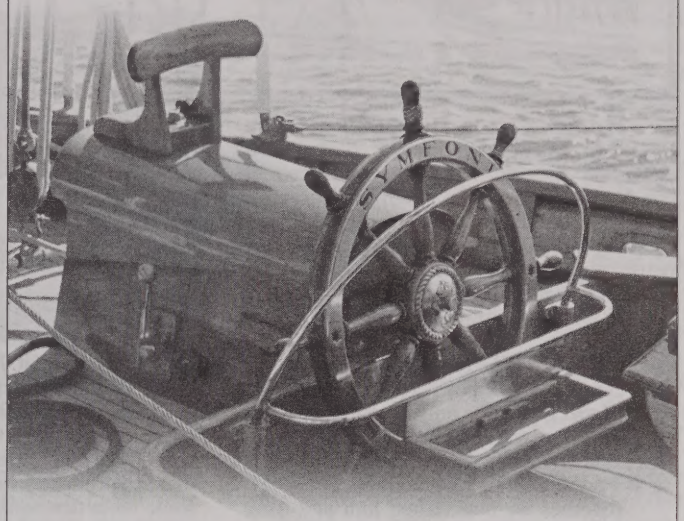
I retrace the path until I come nearer the shore. Everywhere are cobblestones and stranded lobster pots. I sit on a polished driftwood tree ten feet above the level of the sea. What a wave to deposit this up here! From this western point of Cuttyhunk, a mile of reef extends beneath the sea: the Sow and Pigs. Only a few rocks show themselves at high tide. Breaking seas divulge some of the others. Fishermen who know The Pigs come in here; those who don't know come in here but don't come out.

I saunter the drying track amid the moors. Aside from the wind, it is quiet. I see a ring-necked snake and a female catbird. Beside a broad puddle I spy the prints of a deer. A small yellow grasshopper leaps to shelter beneath the goldenrod. He and his million brothers and sisters keep this square mile of Cuttyhunk all to themselves.

Above the tide, a black-backed gull engages the twisting breeze. He swoops and slides and rises and rides for the joy of it. *MoonWind* would act in a similar fashion were I to take her out there. Bracing myself against the heave of the sea and wrestling with the tiller proves arduous at twenty knots and would be exhausting at thirty. Towing the Whitehall would become a constant chore. Should she surf down a wave front and catch me, she has the potential, being heavy, to destroy my outboard motor. I put all thoughts of sailing aside and count the wildflowers. The road begins to climb.

The sky is clear, the sun is bright, the fierce wind strains my sails. As I rise on the foaming crest of the road, I brace my feet, heave on the tiller, lean against the sea.

Please join us!



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Keep up with all the news at
www.thewoodenboatshow.com
For tickets to the WoodenBoat Show and the Lance Lee Tribute Dinner (Saturday evening) call
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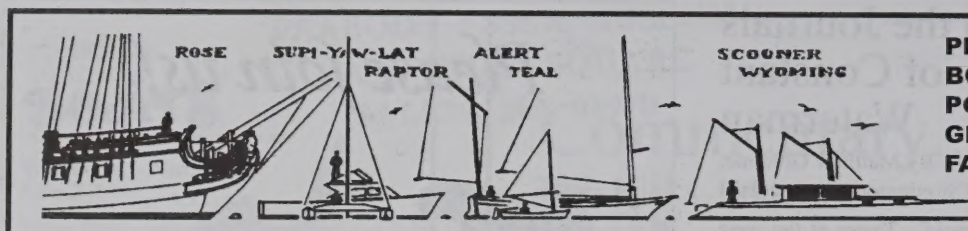


PHIL BOLGER & FRIENDS, INC
BOAT DESIGNERS
PO BOX 1209
GLOUCESTER, MA 01930
FAX 978-282-1348

Phil Bolger & Friends on the Death of Dynamite Payson

Susanne Altenburger

The drive up to Dynamite's wake in Rockland, Maine, that April 1, 2011, was a challenge enough, with my winter-correct car down and driving a rental on all-season tires right through a nor'easter with 6"-12" of pasty snow. Very strenuous. A balance between caution, "I should not be driving far and surely not fast in this weather..." and the need to make it on time, "I must get there no matter what..."

But entering the room I got unexpectedly quite emotional. Nobody here was my kinfolk. And I'd met Dynamite only a handful of times over the years, with Phil not wanting to travel much and Dynamite barely making it south as far as Portland on his own volition.

Together we had visited him and Amy for the first time in February of 1994. An early honeymoon, the first of several until 2009. That day the four of us got to spend much time in the shop, surrounded by tools, models, all the bits and pieces of Dynamite's decades working with Phil and for the budding boatbuilder. Amy offered a fine dinner and we ended the night in their living room, a good place to wind down after a productive time in the shop.

I would literally come to drive Phil to see them more often, in three different cars over the years. Once I showed up alone on my motorbike and Amy asked where Phil was... Phil enjoyed a few hours hanging on to me, but not deep into Maine. Last winter I had planned to see the two of them again. But I had next to no breathing room to hit the road, or so I thought, being impressed with my own near manic schedule.

They had an understanding, Phil and Dynamite. The never saw each other much in person, used the phone sparsely. And if one did not know what they had done together, you'd look at the volume in their correspondence file and guess at a distant, perhaps cool, relationship. They were men of few words, or so it would seem without knowing the extent of their cooperation, or the volume of their writings and ideas in print.

Amy would have, but Dynamite did not find it in himself to cross two state lines and come near Boston to show up at our wedding. And Phil carried "Interstate Papers" to travel more freely but seemed to feel little urge to visit downeast on a regular basis. It was not ill manners nor particularly cranky ideosyncracies. Both Dynamite and Phil had their fair share of ideosyncracies, who doesn't? But for both it just did not seem necessary to communicate in many ways other than their shared focus on this body of work eventually known as "Instant Boats."

Slightly hyperbolic, but more meant to be catchy in a mild mannered downeast low key salesmanship kind of way. Seemingly outlandish claims in these two words, but based on Phil's designs, Harold "Dynamite" Payson did indeed show the uninitiated in many step-by-step examples how, with limited tools and reasonable focus, on might indeed put together a punt, a skiff, something to paddle, row, sail. Perhaps even go to workout on. Building most of the craft he would come to sell designs for, Dynamite found glitches in Phil's work, saw Phil correct them, with both eventually building a rapport that did produce a broad range of simple and some more demanding types.

Inspired, and at time annoyed, by others' efforts at simple designs for the novice builder, Phil had pursued his thinking on simple designs well before Dynamite contacted him in the '60s. And as a resourceful Maine lobsterman, Dynamite did not really need Phil to tell him much about boats either. But having seen Phil write and show design work and concepts in the *Maine Coast Fisherman* on lobsterboats and smaller craft, Dynamite's reaching out to Phil brought these two minds together to result in so many articles and more and more books to share the knowledge on "how to..." Their interest in each other's work and mindsets came to produce designs which made thousands and thousands of folks literally around the world go out to collect tools and materials to set to work on their projects.

They both appreciated elaborate forms, high levels of finish, even justifiable complexity, and certainly elaborations in aesthetics. Both had owned craft to that design and construction, and both grudged the time to make and keep things too pretty. Both read *WoodenBoat* magazine... but both also felt the strong need to re-emphasize that spending many hundreds of hours on sculpting floating furniture finished small craft could not become a standard with which to discourage and alienate would be boatbuilders. Any risk of small boat building becoming too precious had to be balanced by a thoroughly thought through design and construction approach that both offered sophistication and simplicity in plans that respected the average builder's life's constraints. Both budget and man hours were to be taken seriously. And when it was done, the boat should not be an unsightly, obviously home built, crate with dubious behavior to match. Even boxy hulls could be made to be at least pleasant to look at, if and when a boxy shape offered the most utility for the effort. And *WoodenBoat* came to offer both a fair share of support in that high gloss, superb production magazine.

Often with deceptively simple, seemingly crude attributes, perhaps unassuming as a set of plans, rendered in three dimensions many of these designs came to confirm the good taste of their builder/owners once these craft were afloat. There would be those built fast to plain finish and quick use afloat. And those rendered as an expression of deliberate pacing and meticulous attention to every detail topped off with a superb finish. And some projects were (quietly) never finished at all.

Dynamite's customers told, and tell, their tales of success and woe. Many shared their gratification in the no nonsense approach to getting themselves out on the water without too much fretting and second guessing in something they built themself, with their own hands, heads and hearts. Dynamite's writing and all the illustrations reduced much of that anxiety. And Phil's, at times starkly sober, pursuit of simplicity often resulted in craft of their own attractiveness, if not outright charm, when functionality and reasonably good looks come together under a modest budget. "Giving them confidence" to get the work done kept both interested in this shared project for these many years and decades.

There he was lying, dressed in plain work clothes with cap in his hands resting on his belly, in the pine coffin, with the lid just elaborate enough as a matter of minor and mostly functional aesthetics, but all that woodwork left unvarnished. Photos, drawings and paintings of him and his boats to one side and books and models and a 1/1 scale punt to the other. A Gloucester Gull outside on the porch. Just a body. Yes and no.

My emotions were unexpected. Perhaps the strenuous drive had gotten to me some and it kept on snowing. Before the ceremony began I took several runs at approaching him to gradually overcome my unsteadiness of the heart. I would be the last to speak, not scheduled, but readily accepted once I had made it there in time. Still wobbly I pulled myself together enough to recall these memories, and they let me speak for a while, Phil's ring next to mine on my finger.

Both men would come to leave life suddenly. Phil had had his final act of self-determination laid out in his mind for decades. And in principle I agreed with him. I'd just rather he'd had no reason anytime soon. Self-servingly I had come to push aside the obvious and hoped to see us together for longer yet. But he may have left just in time before losing more and eventually the capacity to self-determine. Surrounded by sons and daughters, Dynamite was tending to Amy's needs as she began to ail a while back. But an aneurism in his aorta felled him at an age a few months older than Phil.

There was the obvious sympathy for Amy having lost her love of over 50 years, inconceivable by any measure. Fewer decades and a very different life together, with Dynamite's death I felt that morning not just again the loss of the central figure in my life since the early '90s. Dynamite, suddenly gone, was a living, breathing and working direct connection to Phil's. In both names the work continues. As does life. One way or the other. Certainly poorer as there is indeed less, a severe loss. The important thing is that they both have a legacy indeed. And folks will always build boats.

Dynamite Payson

An Appreciation

By Dennis Hansen

As most of you know the boat building community has lost one of its greats. Harold H. "Dynamite" Payson died unexpectedly on March 23, 2011. Many of his friends and fans have been left reeling, much like when we lost Robb White. For me personally though, it is the loss of my mentor, the man I considered my adopted father and one of the closest friends I'll ever have.

I was a teenaged kid from the West Coast, San Diego, California, who had come to Maine to recuperate from a motorcycle accident. My brother had married into a family with roots in Spruce Head and I came up for the summer of 1973 to let my ankle heal and get back on my feet. I was fascinated by the local fishing boats, yachts and other traditional wooden boats I saw along the waterfront. It wasn't long before I started reading all I could about their history and construction. Several people suggested I go see "Dynamite" if I wanted to learn more about small boat construction. I did, and as the old saying goes, the rest is history. I had to return to San Diego that fall but the hook had been set. I moved to Maine for good in 1976.

One of the first things I did once I was here was to set up a space to build a boat and decided on a Payson/Bolger Surf as my victim. I had met Dynamite back in 1973 so he remembered me when I came to his shop looking for plans. He helped me through that first build (see *Instant Boats*, Chapter 3, "Beginner's Luck, Mostly Bad") and more importantly, through the years, helped me form a vision of how I should be living my life. I wished I'd adopted that vision sooner but I suppose coming to it later is better than not at all. If I had skipped designing snow plows, being an arborist, brewing beer professionally and had gone directly to boat building... well, you know how it goes. Through it all, Dynamite was always there, along with his wife, Amy, to offer their considered thought, encouragement, love and support to see me through my ventures. They always treated me as if I was another of their own children.

In 1985 I took a college writing class and the first assignment was to write about someone I knew. It didn't take me long to decide who that person would be.

Dynamite Payson

"It was a cold, wet, foggy day on the coast of Maine but the wisp of wood smoke weaving its way out of Dynamite's shop chimney assured me of at least an environmentally warm welcome inside. I wasn't quite sure what to expect of him. Glancing about at the boats in the yard and the 1930 Chevy parked next to the shop, I thought, as I grabbed the latch and handle to the door, that Harold "Dynamite" Payson is surely different than most people here in Spruce Head.

I stepped into the building. My senses were bombarded by the penetrating warmth of the wood stove, the sights, the sounds, and the smells. As my eyes were looking over all there was to be seen my nose was busy sorting the odors of cedar, oak, turpentine, varnish and other materials or potions associated with wooden boats. Dynamite stood up from behind the craft he was working on, startling me for a moment. He chuckled at my expression as he walked to greet me with a smile and handshake as warm as the stove. He listened intently as I explained how and why I came to be standing there that day.

My eyes wandered about the shop and the man before me. He had the weathered look of one who grew up hauling his lobster traps by hand, a smallish frame with strong shoulders and arms, and square hips, all slightly softened somewhat by 30 years of hard work. He spoke quietly and slowly, pausing often to consider his next comment or question. He showed me around the shop and handed me the plans for the boat he was then building. When I looked up from the plans I noticed he had returned to his work and was busy fitting a small piece of trim. Thoroughly warmed now by the stove and our conversation, I stood watching him with envy and respect. I didn't understand the feeling that overcame me that day. In fact, I thought it had something to do with boats.

One hot July afternoon many years later, Dynamite stopped by my shop to see how I was doing with my boat. He found me frustrated, sweating and sulking over some problem I was having fitting a plank. As I explained the situation to him he stood peacefully puffing on his pipe. He suggested I should stop and study what I was attempting to do before I touched another piece of wood. He offered several suggestions and I mumbled something about agreeing with him as he was leaving. Deep down inside I knew I should stop and do what he said, that it might lead to some satisfaction. No, darn it all, I want to get this done NOW! I could still hear his truck in the distance as I turned on the saw.

Several weeks later a shortage of bronze boat nails brought me back to Dynamite's shop. He was busy working on a Gloucester Gull dory. I found the nails quickly, then sat back to watch him work. The afternoon light of the summer sun lent a surrealistic glow to the heady feeling I always got in that building. Dynamite went about his work as he usually did. The boat and the shop were scaled to fit the man. Each move he made was planned and calculated as if it had been rehearsed for a play. As he selected a tool it became at once an extension of himself. There was no wasted motion as he moved along the length of the hull; the wood seemed to yield to his command, not his muscle. Thinking back over the months and years that I've known him I had come to realize that this economy of motion and effort wasn't limited to his work; it extended to every part of his life.

While the majority of us bump and struggle our way through life, Dynamite has managed to find a quiet pool out of the rush and turbulence of today's world. He has cut out all the herky jerky motions, pressure, anxiety and social demands that rule our daily lives. With a thorough knowledge of his trade and total mastery of his tools, work had become his play. We stood quietly admiring the nearly completed boat. With a satisfied look on his face, his eyes drank in its shape, each flowing line and crisp detail. I breathed deeply and for a few minutes shared the soft quiet waters of the pool I someday hope to find for myself. Thanks, Dynamite, for sharing it with me."

I went on to build several small boats for myself as a hobby but never really considered building professionally until one of my trips to Dynamite's shop to ponder my future. I was devastated by the situation that had unfolded in the brewery where I was the brewmaster. Once again I was aboard a sinking ship and all I knew was I needed to get off. Didn't have clue how, though. Dynamite had a simple solution. "Why not build a few boats?" I laughed and said "oh sure, I'll just become a boat builder." I had no clue how serious he was. Several days later Dynamite called me and said he had a customer that wanted a Gloucester Light Dory and that I should call him and see if I could strike a deal. I did, and since January, 1998, I've called myself a boat builder.

Since then I've built several dozen small boats and kayaks in my own shop. Like most independent Mainers I have a variety of different occupations that I ply to keep a meager flow of dollars coming my way. The bulk of it has come from a larger boat shop down the road from me where I've done a large amount of work. My goal though, has always been to stay here, at home, working for myself, in my own shop. I've always wanted to have my own "pool of soft, quiet waters" like Dynamite had. Little did I know just a few days after Dynamite had died that I'd be called to a Payson family meeting where I was asked if I'd be interested in carrying on his work. To say I felt honored is an understatement; humbled is more like it. Back in 1985 I had thanked Dynamite for sharing his pool, if only for a moment. Now I was being invited to jump in for a swim.

By now you can guess I accepted the offer and just days after Dynamite left us I mailed out my first set of plans. I'm working my way through the challenge by working from his office and from my computer here at home. Our immediate goal is to continue the fast, personal service Dynamite always gave his customers. For the moment, business is being conducted as Dynamite always did, via checks in the mail and by voice on the telephone. By the time you read this, the H.H. Payson & Company telephone, (207) 594-7587, will be ringing here at my home. Any correspondence sent to Pleasant Beach Road, South Thomaston will still get to me or you can write directly to H.H. Payson and Company, PO Box 122, Spruce Head, ME 04859.

One of the first new features we plan to add will be a more direct email connection with our customers and the ability for them to pay for items online. From there, we have lots of ideas of how we can further Dynamite's contribution to the world of boat building.

I want to thank Amy and Dynamite for making such a big difference in my life and for all the love and confidence sent my way by the entire family. I will do my best to continue the legacy Dynamite has left us all.

You write to us about...

Activities & Experiences...

Florida Boating Life

Had a nice sail recently, 80° with winds 10 to 15. Saw one manatee (12'), some dolphin feeding next to shore that disappeared before we got near and several eagles or other species of bird at a very high altitude (forgot to use the binocs). Saw regular speeds of 4.4-5.3mph in our 16' Melon Seed. Tide was 2.5'-3' above mean low so we had no issues with submerged rocks or oyster bars. We had launched here once before in the Birdwatcher but only motored out the channel because the tide was not favorable that time. We can see the rocks just outside the channel in places. We diddled around going upstream in a couple of places around Bayport towards Weeki Wachee, on the outside towards Pine Island Beach, around a few marsh islands and out to where we were looking at nothing but the Gulf. Bayport is just a small county ramp and park, had historical significance during the Civil War. It's north of Hernando Beach and Aripeka.

Rex and Kathie Payne, Spring Hill, FL

Information of Interest...

About Kenneth Grahame

March 8 was the birthday of essayist and children's author Kenneth Grahame, born in Edinburgh, Scotland (1859). He is best known for his book *The Wind in the Willows* (1908), which he composed from bedtime stories he told to his son. The book helped steer children's literature away from stories that taught children how to behave, and toward stories that sparked their imaginations.

His mother died when he was five, and he went to live with his grandmother in her big, run down house on the Thames. He withdrew into an imaginary world. When he returned at age 46 with his son, he found that he remembered every detail, and he realized that children have a "secret kingdom" in their minds where they can go when they are upset or bored by the rest of the world.

He had already published two books of stories for children, but *The Wind in the Willows* was rejected by publishers because it had talking animals in it. At the time, talking animals were considered too fantastic. Teddy Roosevelt, a fan of Grahame's earlier work, convinced a publisher to take the book. It was a huge success, and it continues to sell well 100 years later. Grahame was able to retire from his bank job because of the book. He lived for another 25 years, but he never wrote another one.

In the book, Ratty delivers sage advice to Mole, saying, "There is nothing, absolutely nothing, half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats."

James Lovegren, San Benito, TX

Boston Harbor Islands New National Geographic Trails Illustrated Map

National Geographic Maps has released its first Trails Illustrated Map for Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area. Developed in close collaboration with the BHI Alliance and members of the BHI Partnership, this detailed outdoor recreation map provides extensive coverage of the area, including the 34 islands, shoreline parks and downtown Boston, from the Boston Inner Harbor over to Little Brewster Island and down to the World's End. As with our previous Trails Illustrated Maps, this two-sided map offers the most detailed and up-to-date information for the area.

The front side contains both bathymetry and topography to make it a perfect multifunctional map for kayaking, hiking, fishing and other outdoor recreation. Ferry terminals and routes are clearly marked as well as water taxis, boat ramps, beacons, historic sites, campgrounds, trails and more.

The reverse side of the map features high resolution satellite imagery of historic structures, facilities and terrain. The map also includes recommended places to visit, regulations and other valuable information. Like all Trails Illustrated Maps, our Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area title is printed on waterproof, tear-resistant material. SRP is $11.95.

For more information, visit http://www.natgeomaps.com/ti_265.

About GFI Protection

This is not a letter about how to wire your boat. That is between you, your electrician and your chemist. This letter is about a friend who asked why her boat pops breakers when not in homeport?

Most shore power is wired with three current carrying conductors. They are color coded red, white or black. There is also a bond wire, bare or green. The sum of the current through the three current carrying conductors must add up algebraically to zero (Kirchhoff's Current Law). If they don't, there is current leakage through an unintended path (it could be your body!). This problem could go undetected unless the supply circuit has ground fault interrupter (GFI) breakers.

Some marinas don't have GFI breakers, most public docks do. This is why you may not pop breakers at your homeport but do when elsewhere. An electrician who understands basic electricity can fix the problem.

The bond wire is to carry stray currents safely to the utility's ground plate. Unfortunately, it also bonds the underwater metal on all boats in an area using shore power. The mixed nobility of the metals combined with the brackish water (electrolyte) forms a corrosion cell that only a chemist can fathom. You might want to add corrosion protection, it's not going away. It's been around for hundreds of years.

If you happen to travel on the Oswego Branch of the NYS Barge canal, stay over at Minetto. We are friendly people, have wonderful shops and also have GFI protection.

Carl Allen, Minetto, NY

Hi-Liner Peapod a Good Boat

I have owned a Hi-Liner Peapod since 1984, it is well designed and rows very well (best with two rowers) with a pair of 7½' Shaw & Tenney oars. I have the sailing rig, but it doesn't sail all that well, at least I can't sail it well!

Cecil Benson, Kennebunkport, ME

Dennis a First Class Builder

In his letter in the February issue about his boatshop, Dennis Hansen understates my location (he said "nearby"). Actually, I am right across the road from him. As a result I can keep track of his work. He is a first class builder and his finish work is superb.

Peter Spectre, Spruce Head, ME

Up & Out Device

I've finally finished my "Up & Out" device that works on my 9' kayak for my arthritic paddling buddy. To help him to exit the kayak parallel to the banking I stand in the water on the deep side supporting the boat while he struggles up a waxed plastic slide onto the aft turtle deck. It's not easy for him. I'm glad to see that you and others are doing work on inventive ways to help the handicappped get out on the water.

Bob McAuley, Woodridge,IL

Opinions..

Ode to Technology

I don't Tweet and I don't Twitter,
I've got better ways to fritter
My time away.

No Facebook nor NetBook neither,
No Linkedin, don't get a fever
Without ebay.

Amazon's a river to me,
Google is how my eyes see
And what's hulu?

Sears catalog is more my media
Than that there thing called Wikipedia,
Thought you knew!

Got no site, got no blog,
When I share, it's with my dog.
Just him and me.

Winders are for seein' out
And if Macs were bigger, there's no doubt
I'd be happy.

'f I had a BlueTooth, I'd call ol' Doc,
DVDs come as a shock.
Don't have a clue!

ipod, upod, wiipod, Berries,
Old black phone is what still carries
My thoughts to you.

I can't figger what's all them games
What's got letters instead of names.
I don't need Wiis.

So, when I pass, you can betcher ass
It'll be because I'm outa gas,
Not batteries.
I'm done.

°IrwinSchuster.

This Magazine...

A Jewel

The March issue is a jewel, articles are varied and interesting, covering sailing surfboards, kayaks, canoes, birchbark Indian canoes, 15' WW Potters, a Presto 30 and a schooner being built outdoors.

The geographical spread ranges over Washington State, Minnesota, Canada, the Arctic, New England, New York, Maine, Maryland, Virginia and south Florida.

It is also good to see that Essex, Massachusetts, is a place where real men are still at work, building a boat outside in the snow in January! Brrrr!

Jim Barnhill, Raleigh, NC

Just Right Pace for Reading

The mix of regular contributors, articles and reminiscing about of the near and more distant past is just right for me to pace my reading. If it were otherwise I'd sit up all night to devour the entire issue in one sitting. Hugh Ware's "Beyond the Horizon" remains my favorite with the UK Dinghy Association's sea travels, Robert Summers "Shiver Me Timbers" and the classified ads running close behind. So the present mix suits me, as my capacity for all nighters, be they sailing or reading, has diminished to just about nil.

Bob Groot, Kinmount, ON

A Pleasure Doing Business

We love your magazine, not only for the stories and articles, but also the classified ads. A Mr Harold Ziegler from Connecticut advertised some sailboat components which we purchased. He was extremely considerate, accurate, fair priced and helpful ensuring a prompt delivery. It was a pleasure doing business with this honorable gentleman.

We give Mr Harold Ziegler our "stamp of approval" for all the *MAIB* readers. May you all have calm seas and a gentle breeze.

Winters Brothers,
www.woodmarinecleats.com

Mid-Atlantic Messabout

Thank you for publishing our announcement of our Eastern (Mid-Atlantic) Messabout in your March issue. Five years ago I was going where angels fear to tread, designing my own boat with no experience designing or building (I call it a "BMW knock off," Bolger/Michalak/Welsford with apologies). An early contributor to Duckworks online, (Steve Bosquette: "You can build a boat, sure you can!") tried to organize an Eastern Messabout but attracted no takers. Steve has built more than a dozen boats over his lifetime and spent much of his life in Maine. In '07 we met, as he and others found me at Duckworks, and he and a handful gathered at Kingston, New York, but I missed it.

Meanwhile Steve came over, saw my build, and was there to help me launch. In '08 and '09 larger handfuls had a ball at "Eastern Messabouts" pulled together by Steve at Hawk Island Marina on the Rancocas River, just off the Delaware north of Philadelphia. By now we were boating buddies, living an hour apart.

The current, lack of a beach, and limited camping kept us from trying in '10, but we used the season to explore other places, Elk Neck, Maryland, among them. I had such a ball there last September that the endorphins may still be in my system (see "A Real Blow on Big Water" in Duckworks Magazine). Small boat folks seem to be pretty friendly, helpful people. I couldn't have got away with it without the help I got. So we want to see and sail other boats so we're trying again first weekend in June.

Bob Throne

In Memoriam...

Dynamite Payson

My friend, Dynamite Payson, introduced me to *MAIB* many years ago. I will remember him as a consummate craftsman, an insightful author and a genuine individual who, with his wife Amy, I was privileged to know. I'm sure many of your readers feel as I do. Thank you for your dedication to an endeavor he endorsed.

Walter Lacey, Keene, NH

Henry A. McCarthy Jr.

June 5, 1927 – March 27, 2011

"Mac" McCarthy Jr, 83, of Sarasota, Florida, who contributed a number of articles to *MAIB* in bygone years, died March 27, 2011. Mac was born in Mount Vernon, New York, on June 5, 1927. He joined the US Coast Guard in 1945, serving as an aerographer's mate on the *USS Charlotte, USS Dearborn* and the *USS Milledgeville*. Mac moved to Ft Myers Beach, Florida, in the early 1950s where he met and married his first wife Lois. He was engaged in the construction industry. When construction work was slow, he would crew on a shrimp boat to the Dry Tortugas and the Bay of Campeche.

Mac moved his family to Sarasota in 1968 and continued in the construction field. In the 1970s he began building canoes and other small boats using the cedar strip method of construction. He handcrafted hundreds of canoes, sailboats, kayaks and rowing shells under his "Feather Canoe" brand. He studied small boat design and developed several popular models such as the "Wee Lassie," "Wee Lassie II" and the "Big Mac."

In 1996 his "how to" book, *Featherweight Boatbuilding*, was published by *WoodenBoat* magazine. The book inspired hundreds of people around the world to build a Wee Lassie canoe and get out on the water. His expanding reputation for strip building led him to teach at the WoodenBoat School in Brooklin, Maine. This teaching later shifted to his canoe shop on North Washington Blvd in Sarasota. Dozens of residents and visitors learned to build boats amidst freshly milled cedar, tools of all description, model ships in every phase of construction and large photographs of Mac's favorite canoeing waters. Mac's boat shop became a favorite meeting place for people interested in simply "messing about in boats." While boats were built friendships were formed. His newsletter, the *Wee Lassie*, was mailed to small boat fans around the world.

Mac was active in the Wooden Canoe Heritage Association and was a member of the Nautical Research Guild. With failing health, Mac closed his canoe shop and moved into an assisted living facility. While confined to a wheelchair, he produced dozens of finely crafted ship models while welcoming guests to his miniature boat shop.

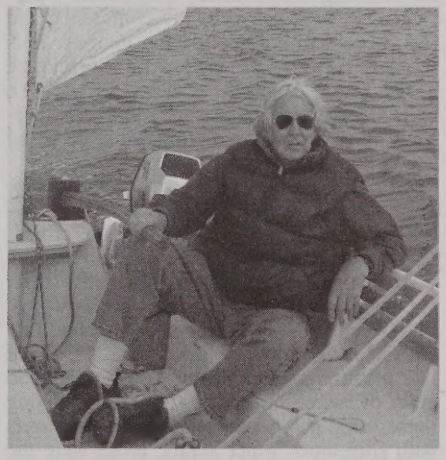
Mac was an inspiration to his family, his friends and the small boat community and he will be very much missed.

Bill Nelson

It is with great sadness that I write to tell you of the passing of my father, Bill Nelson. He died at home in the early hours on April 2, 2011. Dad was a long time subscriber and occasional contributor to *MAIB* and enjoyed your publication very much. He lived in Cape May, New Jersey, and over the years built a number of Phil Bolger designs, including a dory, at least four Crystal rowboats, a Black Skimmer and a Power Skiff. The Black Skimmer and Power Skiff he built while in his 70s.

The photo shows him at the tiller of the Black Skimmer, named the *Merri Sue*, after his wife. It is how I like to remember him, messing about in boats.

Charles Nelson, Raleigh, NC



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A Salty View of the Everglades

By Tom Willey
Murphy, North Carolina

Sunset between masts at NW Cape Sable.

The un-airconditioned classroom with a wall of jalousied windows opened to the warm tropical air laden with the smells of exotic fruits and flowers. This was all the distraction this eighth grader needed to fantasize about thatch roofed huts in the Everglades, catching large mouthed bass, hunting ducks, eating wild papayas and getting away from all the expectations and disappointments of being 14 years old in South Miami in 1968. This fantasy was a powerful tool for me to cope with what seemed so undesirable in this suburban environment. It elaborated itself over the years before dissipating into the background of my mind. Although dormant, this fantasy re-emerged 42 years later in the form of a desire to sail my home built, self designed sharpie sailboat down the coast from Everglades City to Flamingo then up through Whitewater Bay and back to the "outside". returning to Everglades City, a voyage of 153 miles in the wilderness of Everglades National Park.

I met long time friend Stevie Gifford at Fort Myers airport on Sunday morning. His flight from Portland arrived on time after a hurried ten-day preparation for his participation in this adventure that I had been planning for such a long time. I had emailed Stevie about two weeks prior to my departure and he instantly mailed back that he wanted to go too! Great! I had fully expected to make this trip alone just because of the unique and ancient reasons around which my interest had developed. It never occurred to me that anyone else I knew would be interested or able to go along. As it turned out, Stevie's participation was crucial to my confidence and our success in completing the journey. Fortunately I was able to borrow on short notice a 16' Prijon Seayak for Steve to use. An avid kayaker and adventurer, this gave Stevie a vessel of his own with which he could accompany me.

Stevie and I had been buddies since we were seven years old and after a 38-year hiatus, we were reconnecting to share this adventure. It is interesting how Stevie and I related. It seems that those formative years from sseven to twelve that we spent together were a time when we developed common values and vocabulary that still bond us together. It felt like a kinship relationship. Those childhood years of swimming, fishing, working, playing horseshoes, peashooter war, hunting squirrels with slingshots, water skiing, those were the bonding experiences that still had traction. It felt like we both had a common and private language of our own. It was unexpected and remarkable to re-experience this long ago formed relationship.

The final purchases for our journey were made after leaving the airport. They consisted of groceries, camp fuel and fishing gear for Stevie. Somehow we overlooked lunch in our zeal to get on the water. Handfuls of cashews sufficed. We arrived in Everglades City around 3pm, found the ranger station, and purchased our park permits before launching at a private boat ramp across the street. Sorting the essential gear, packing the kayak and putting the overflow gear into the sailboat, *Jennifer Gayle* (*JG*), was agonizing. All the food, water, clothes and equipment for two of us for up to two weeks had to be included. Since I had trailered *JG* and the kayak from my house in North Carolina, I had had plenty of time to pack and organize my own gear previously.

The kayak has about 2cf of dry storage in the bow compartment and about 3cf of water resistant (translation, wet) storage in the stern. *JG* has two large dry storage/flotation compartments of about 28cf total. We did leave behind a few items since we had all our compartments filled. Some fresh produce and a fleece blanket did not make the final cut, along with my 6' bait net.

Jennifer Gayle is a 14' screwed and glued plywood sharpie with an external chine. I built her in the winter of 2010 in four months. She is a modified Jim Michalak Mayfly design with a balanced lug mainsail and a spritsail mizzen. Since I wanted to use my existing 68sf sail I added a triangular 12sf mizzen to achieve the 80sf designed sail area for the Mayfly. In addition to being able to re-use the sail from my Piccup pram (another Michalak home built design), I was able to lower the center of effort of the sail plan, creating additional stability for the relatively narrow, 4' beam, boat. The narrowness however makes for good rowability, oars being my auxiliary propulsion. In calm water the 500lb loaded boat rows at 2.5mph. The 4'x6.5' center cockpit is clear and usable space due to the side mounted, pivoting centerboard design. During the day I sail and/or row from a folding beach chair and at night two can sleep aboard in my two man Marmot tent.

Finally on the water by 5pm, we caught the last hour of the falling tide to make it part of the way out of Sandfly Pass. I rowed the first two miles with the mast and sails lashed outside of the gunwale. Several fishermen and women were on the shore as we passed under the low bridge into Chokoloskee Bay. They waved and I garrulously offered, "Los viejos y el mar". Another guy further out on the jetty offered back, "The old man and the sea." I said "Diego."

Once the tide turned we were dead in the water and had to stop short of our goal for the night, Jewell Key. Anchoring and sleeping aboard was our only legal recourse. We could still see the ranger station in Everglades City a couple of miles away, which made me nervous. We prepared a beans and rice communal meal on a beach. Sure enough, well after dark a late returning park ranger spotted us, literally, in our predicament. I think the light was 1,000,000 candlepower. After our explaining, he understood our inability to move on and allowed us to remain there until dawn. We were underway the next morning shortly after dawn, catching the falling tide the remaining couple of miles out of the pass.

The first night on the water was great! Although no moon appeared until near dawn, the Big Dipper and the north star, Polaris displayed themselves immediately above my prone face and the tent netting as I lay down. And closing my tired eyes I was serenaded by crickets ashore, snapping shrimp below and the gentle rocking of *JG* on the falling tide. Awakening at one point in the night I heard the shrimp sounding like sleet falling on the windshield of my car, which I had experienced a few days earlier in North Carolina. No, that is not sleet and it was 65°, not 31°.

Now snapping shrimp are so amazing that they really deserve a more elaborate description. I did not see one of these creatures so I cannot describe them first hand. If I had had my bait net, I would have tried to catch one but, as far as I was able to see, they were invisible. In a university research video from Holland and Germany it is shown that these shrimp have one specialized claw that can create a cavitation bubble that immediately collapses and makes the snapping sound. This effect is useful in that it stuns prey. Other references report incredible temperatures (4,700°C) and even light production from this burst. These shrimp live on the bottom in crevices and consume other kinds of shrimp and fish. There are over 620 species of this family, Alpheidae.

Monday was our first full day on the water and what a great day it was. The morning presented an east breeze of 5-10mph for one long port tack to the SSE. After an hour's calm at midday, the breeze resumed for another four hours from the SW for an afternoon on starboard tack. The wind died at 5pm, requiring me to row the last two miles to our planned camp at Hog Key, making for a 22-mile day. This was satisfying after our late start the previous day.

We soon discovered that the published GPS coordinates did not make the campsite readily visible on approach. We had to "invent" a campsite at Hog Key. That turned out to be the case for all of our subsequent campsites that were not punctuated by a port-a-potty, including Highland Beach, Graveyard Creek and East Clubhouse. Although those sites were pretty wild, that also became their attraction for me. I hope it also speaks to the care that previous campers exercised on their visits. The most omnipresent evidence of man on the oceanfront sites was crab pot warp, buoys, and washed up traps.

The stone crab harvest is one of the few sustainable fisheries because the claws can be removed and the live crabs returned to the ocean to grow new ones. This is a most intriguing way to consume meat whereby the donor does not die in the process. It is kind of like drinking milk. It is not necessary to kill the cow to harvest the protein. Apparently the crab traps are not allowed in the Park waters, but upon exploring the watery boundary, I discovered an endless line of buoys about every 100' along the edge of the charted Park waters.

The biggest surprise at Hog Key was the extent of exposed mud at low tide. We arrived on a falling tide and it took us an hour to find a site where the boat would be within 100' of our campsite. We were lucky to find a deep tidal creek near a campsite. In the

morning's low tide it appeared to be a quarter mile to the water line. The beaches here were sandy down to the half tide line were they then changed to mudflat. Another aspect of the tidal change is that the afternoon low tide was 1' higher than the morning low tide. This explained the vast mud flat in the morning that was not apparent the evening before.

Exhausted, we set up our Hog Creek camp after dark. A simple hot supper and into the scratcher to escape the insects for the night. The crickets and the sounds of large fish feeding in the tidal creek 50' away were effective serenaders of sleep.

In the morning the sailboat was high and dry on a steep bank 15' away and 4' above the water, an easy push into the deep. The wind had been calm all night making for an easy and gentle departure in the morning on a very light southerly breeze. Unfortunately the foul breeze strengthened and sustained itself throughout the day, making for a disappointing beat into 2' waves and a day's progress of only seven miles. We arrived to Highland Beach about 4pm and gave up for the day. The tide was falling from half-high when we arrived. I anchored the bow into the breeze and tied off the stern to a stump on shore. I positioned the boat at the half-high tide mark thinking this would allow us to be floating at dawn the next day.

In the predawn morning *JG* was afloat but astonishingly, as we ate breakfast and broke camp, the water under the boat vanished as we watched. In spite of our frantic and tiresome 150' push over the watery mud flat, we were stranded. The water receded faster than we could push and drag! Departure was delayed about four hours until the tide returned.

We were humiliated into a forced recreation period. Stevie got out his Martin Backpacker guitar and we had song time. "Red River Valley," "House of the Rising Sun," and "Ghost Riders in the Sky" punctuated the morning calm. It was relaxing and enjoyable to collect ourselves and reorganize our gear.

On the water by 11am, I was tacking once again into the southerly breeze. Stevie and I enjoyed VHF radio contact on channel 68 for the next several hours. As the wind and waves built out of the south, a second day of slow SSE progress ensued. By late afternoon I made one last long tack after "rowersailing" with the oars, bringing me to Shark Point, just above Ponce de Leon Bay. As I approached land, a foul current further reduced progress. We spent the night at the mouth of Graveyard Creek in a woodpile. The landing and accommodations were fairly inhospitable here. The slick honeycomb mud, tangled timber, mosquito puddles, raccoons and tiny tent sites made this site our least favorite so far. The good part was we had plenty of firewood.

From the huge stacks of dry driftwood Stevie made our first of many campfires. It was our fourth night out and we were beginning to get into the rhythm and routine of the maritime adventure. Too tired to do more than enjoy it, we promised ourselves we would get a campfire picture next time. Into the tents we went about 9pm to avoid the mosquitoes. This was our most active raccoon site on the trip. Stevie was bumped and awakened by a coon in the middle of the night. I got up twice to defend our garbage bag against the critters. I tried pepper spray on the rascal but he was little deterred, returning 15 minutes later. At that point I gave up and cleaned up the mess in the morning.

High and dry at Hog Key.

By this time we were learning to get off around sunrise to make a good travel day with ample time to set up camp in the afternoon. We were across Ponce de Leon Bay by 10am on a fair tide and light SSE breeze. Our first waypoint rendezvous was at the mouth of the Little Shark River. I could not help but laugh out loud as I approached our meeting point. Stevie's radio handle had been 'Coon Kicker,' based on a story he had told me about one of his previous encounters with a troop of raccoons on the beach. At the time he had rushed the group thinking they would run away in response to his aggressive posture. Well, one little guy came straight at him and in a split second quandary, Steve punted! Up and away went the raccoon, hence the nickname.

Approaching the mouth of the Little Shark River, I spotted a low profile fishing skiff with two human figures standing tall in close proximity to channel marker #1, a semblance of a cross. Here, with them in full white suited and white hooded insect regalia, I saw what appeared to be a Ku Klux Klan ritual. I decided it unwise to use that radio handle again. It might not be Stevie responding. As it turned out Stevie's radio died about that time and we were not able to enjoy radio contact for the balance of the trip.

After crossing the mouth of the Little Shark River we technically arrived at Cape Sable, although the tan sandy beach did not begin for another five miles. The shoreline from Shark point to Northwest Cape is fairly inhospitable, consisting of stacks of driftwood along the shore like we encountered at Graveyard Creek and saw in the mouth of the Shark River. Progress toward the sandy beaches slowed as a foul SSE breeze piped up. I was able to make headway with tightly sheeted sails in a close reach until I approached Northwest Cape. It was early afternoon and I could see that I would not be able to go much farther. The waves were bending in diffraction patterns around the Cape putting the chop right on my nose. Six-tenths of a mile short of the Cape I beached *JG* and walked her southward to find Stevie, who was waiting. We found a suitable campsite in the lee of the Cape and set up camp by 3pm.

What a great spot. The water was cleaner and it was open and breezy, keeping the insects at bay. I was anxious to bathe and wash clothes since it was our fifth day out. We also had the opportunity to dry out some of the damp clothes and Stevie's down bag. It had gotten wet our first day out and took ten days of drying before he could sleep in it again. Fortunately he had a down jacket that he could use for a cover at night and the temperatures were in the 60°s. The best time of day for drying was 2-6pm.

Bathing in the salt water was surprisingly refreshing. It also did a fair job of refreshing my clothes. By toweling off, the salt did not precipitate on my skin and itch. The clothes were slower to dry because of the salt content but they felt comfortable. A little fresh water rinse to get some of the salt out was helpful. The salt is hygroscopic.

It was eggs for supper for the second time. That was my favorite meal. With the ample storage of the sailboat, I was able to

Camp at Highland Beach.

bring along two dozen farm fresh eggs. Stevie and I both enjoyed the eggs in addition to our canned and packaged camp food. The absence of refrigeration was not a hardship since the ambient temperatures were moderate. A diet coke, boxed milk, juice and water were all pleasantly cool enough to enjoy in the English fashion. Apples, oranges and carrots held up well. Butter, cheese, oil, mustard, ketchup and mayo endured. I did not bring any beer but the bourbon was potable. The bottle of red wine was not opened but would have gone well with the homemade spaghetti if I had had anyone with whom to share it.

By dark we were both tired and ready to retire. At about 5:30 the no-see-ums emerged on their vendetta against mankind. But instead of retiring we built a nice fire below the high tide mark in front of our tents and enjoyed the darkness for a couple more hours. The fire was a pretty effective insect repellent, especially near the smoky side. Stevie had a great insect net hoodie with a zippered face. He gave me a nice headnet. The one I had brought had hoops and coarse netting which I found awkward and difficult to see through. I used cotton gloves on my hands and wool socks or DEET on my ankles and hands. We both found the wool socks useful for both the insects and the damp conditions. Although the predominant pests here were no-see-ums, a few miles back at Graveyard Creek it was mosquitoes. There must be some subtle habitat changes that account for the difference.

It was fun to beachcomb each evening when we landed. Stevie was very resourceful with the beach furniture. We had table and chairs several nights. Here at NW Cape we even had a stainless steel table, probably a fixture from a commercial fishing boat. Crab pots were useful two other nights in this regard. We retired for the moonless night and were able to make an early start the next day.

Friday morning dawned with another light southerly breeze. Rowing, rowing while sailing and finally sailing, I got around Middle Cape by late morning. I sailed out a couple of miles as far as the Park boundary and was met by a Canadian couple cruising their yacht out of Okeechobee to the Bahamas. They reported a 0.5knot foul current which I had suspected. My visit to the day marker confirmed the flow.

The Middle Cape is the most dramatic of the three on Cape Sable. It makes a full 90° angle so that rounding it makes a big difference in the play of the wind. My foul breeze finally became fair, allowing me to make good progress to the SE on a moderate S breeze. The sightseeing became more possible as the sailing became easier. The foul breezes disappeared for the balance of our journey as our direction and the weather patterns changed. I was beach cruising at this point and that continued all the way to Flamingo.

Some interesting sailboats were beached south of Middle Cape, two of which turned out to be Outward Bound craft. They were double masted open row boats around 25' long with graceful traditional lines. A third modern double masted Presto type ketch filled her sails and departed to the north as I watched. A graceful and capable vessel she appeared to be.

By midday East Cape appeared and I beached for five minutes to confer with Stevie who was visiting a young couple in a canoe. Our next rendezvous was to be East Clubhouse, a few miles short of Flamingo. After rounding East Cape, my southerly breeze made for a fair broad reach all afternoon. A rising tide added to the ease of sailing into Florida Bay and by following the shoreline 0.5 to 1.0 mile offshore, I made progress straight toward the head of the Flamingo channel.

Upon reaching the East Clubhouse coordinates, I headed N toward the shoreline of overhanging trees, looking for Stevie. The milky, turbid water became quite shallow and I spotted what looked to be a 4' shark tailing along the flats. No sign of a campsite nor Stevie. After five minutes of evaluation and a few shouts I decided he went on to Flamingo. I headed out toward deeper water and channel marker #2. Not knowing what I would find in Flamingo, I scouted possible overnight spots along the way.

It was about an hour before dark when I entered the channel, immediately on top of a manatee who flushed out of the shallow mud, disturbing the boat in her wake. It was exciting. There on the outer seawall at Flamingo were two more Outward Bound ketches. I proceeded inside the harbor and docked at the marina where Stevie was waiting for me. Exhausted after 11 hours of sailing and about 27 miles I set the tent up in the boat and had a forgettable supper of cold pork and beans and crackers on a park bench. A young Argentinian couple fishing on the docks reported a crocodile in the harbor. I was too tired to look for him. Stevie and I went to bed head to toes in the tight quarters of the cockpit.

A stiff breeze blew all night and the harbor lights made for a poor night of sleep. By daybreak we were rested enough for our next challenge, portaging 300 yards around a dam (damn). Yes, there is a dam at Flamingo that prevents circumnavigating Cape Sable. I did not remember this obstacle from my visit here when I was a kid with my father. Was it there then? In any case, before I could put the tent away Stevie had conscripted two Good Samaritan fisherman to haul my boat around on their trailer. They were very kind and generous and would not accept payment. I only wish I had thought to give them a jar of sourwood honey I had with me. I bet they would have liked that.

After enjoying a hot sausage biscuit from the marina store, we were back on the water by 9:30am, headed for Coot Bay. Not so quickly, however, as I had to unstep the mast immediately to go under our second low bridge of the trip. I had to test the height of the bridge by approaching slowly and narrowly averted getting dismasted as a puff of breeze blew the mast in contact with the concrete. I was on the oars and able to prevent a disaster but it was reckless on my part. It took ten minutes and we were underway once again. The canal was quite scenic although narrow and trafficked by several boats this Saturday morning. I thought of Lisa and the bird watching opportunities here as the overhanging trees presented wildlife up close. Alligators and turtles were on the banks. I remembered it as a long traverse to Coot Bay from my trip as a kid but in about an hour we were there.

I could see ripples in the more open waters of Coot Bay as we approached. The canal had offered intermittent light sailing breezes and I had the mizzen and main up sporting my full complement of 80sf of canvas. Upon entering the open waters of the Bay I was immediately overpowered on a downwind leg. After waiting five minutes for a motorboat to pass, I rounded up into the wind and lowered and furled the main. I sailed the rest of the day on the 12sf mizzen alone, making a comfortable 3.5mph all the way to Watson Creek chickee.

This was the first and only time on the trip that I became overpowered by the wind. Other changes in the breeze were better anticipated and adjusted for and at no time was I in danger of capsizing. The cardinal rule for me for dinghy cruising is to never become overpowered. Going over is wet, uncomfortable and demoralizing. Gear can easily go missing and the comfort and safety of the trip can become compromised. The factors that cause me to become overpowered are impatience and inattentiveness. As long as I maintain a low center of gravity and a low center of effort, my dinghy can be as seaworthy as a large ballasted yacht. I am the ballast and sail control keeps the center of effort low.

Another comfort factor is the dryness of the boat. *Jennifer Gayle* was quite dry on this trip. Beating into a 2'-3' foot chop produced some spray, but other than that, the wettest moments were the first of each day when boarding from knee-deep water. By noon things were pretty dry. The wool socks and brushed nylon pants were comfortable under the conditions.

After traversing Coot Bay I entered Tarpon Creek with a strong ebb tide in my favor. It was a pleasant and scenic float with a few fishing boats anchored and catching grunts and snappers among the mangroves.

Once into Whitewater Bay I noticed cumulus clouds building and approaching from the SE. I ventured out into the open bay in a strong breeze and with trepidation, hoping not to get caught in the open water in a blow. I watched the clouds closely and although they darkened, they never fully developed into rain or lightning generators, fortunately for me.

As I followed the channel markers toward the NW, I noticed a very large vessel approaching on the horizon. It turned out to be two houseboats lashed together heading back to Flamingo. The water in the channel seemed about 4' deep but I noticed motorboats passing wide of the channel leaving muddy trails in the water. I stayed to the right side of the channel in anticipation of meeting the houseboats now 400 yards away.

I noticed that I kept moving more to the right in response to the paralactic shift of the approaching vessel. Looking down I could see 3' of water. At this point I realized, "This guy is trying to pass me on the right!" I frantically motioned him port to port with my charts in my hand for emphasis. He obliged and we passed uneventfully but outside of the channel. In his wake were tons of mud and hopefully no manatee or porpoise body parts. The porpoise I saw up close earlier did have wounds on their backs.

After following the channel markers to #30 I veered north toward Watson Creek chickee. Fifteen miles from Flamingo and out of the channel, the bay became pretty quiet and wild feeling. I could not resist a few whoops and hollers once arriving at the chickee and meeting Stevie who had preceded me as usual.

It was great to have a roof from the sun and dew, a non-sandy cook and tent surface, and a raccoon free refuge for the night. It was about 4pm so we had time for the Martin Backpacker and Stevie's great music. We topped off the evening with a real food

supper of fried potatoes, onions, and scrambled eggs. It was another great day with fair breezes allowing me to cover about 18 miles in six hours.

Real food for supper at Watson Creek chickee

Our departure strategy required careful planning. The ebb tide would not only speed and ease our travel, but it would also help us identify channels running out to the sea in the mouth of the Shark River. Liesurely sailing and paddling together, Stevie and I had a great Super Bowl Sunday morning taking in the sights and singing a cappella "Ba Hat" in rounds

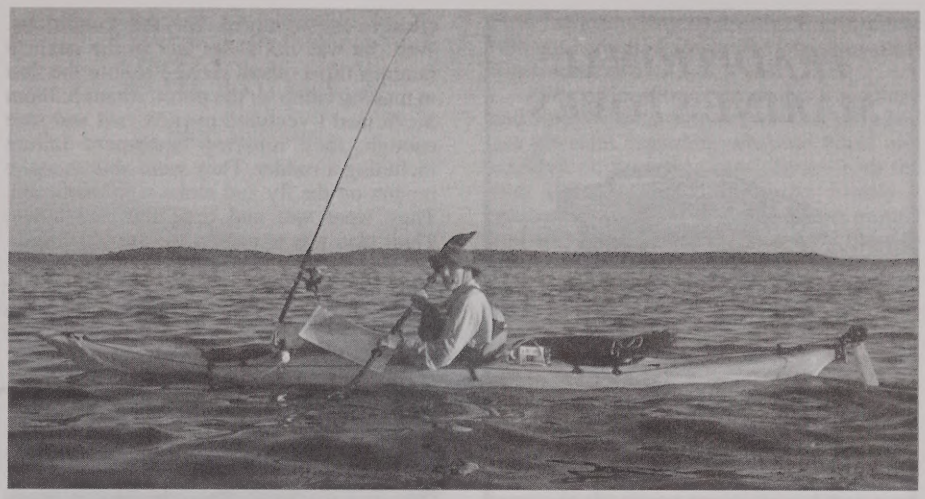
Our journey at this point became more relaxed for me. We had achieved our destination and were on our return, over halfway through and seven days into the trip. Stevie had a departure flight for 16 days after his arrival. After three short travel days in a row in the early part of our trip we had begun making contingency plans. Two of our options were stopping short of Flamingo and returning to Everglades City or continuing to Flamingo where we would end our trip and take a taxi back to EC to pick up the car. I was happy now that it became apparent that we would finish the round trip as planned, with over a week's time to get back.

The mouth of the Shark River was very striking to me this day. It had the feel of a tropical jungle, as I would imagine the mouth of the Amazon. There was undulation in the high forest canopy of mixed tree species. The plumage birds and waterfowl added interest. The splashing fish and porpoises suggested an abundance of life under water. The popping shrimp could be heard through the hull of my boat.

Arriving back in Ponce de Leon Bay around midday, we completed our circumnavigation of Cape Sable and were now back tracking toward Everglades City, about 50 miles away. Stevie and I parted here and both headed to Highland Beach. With a reefed mainsail and a fair breeze I made great headway and arrived by 4:30 or so. This had been our third 20+ mile day of the trip!

I got to bathe and wash clothes again before dark even though the water was turbid. Things came out smelling better and I felt refreshed. We gathered up a nice pile of firewood and had our meal. The fire provided entertainment and relief from the insects until about 9pm when we retreated to our respective, insect-free tents.

I had been listening to the weather radio each day and they were reporting a frontal passage later in the week. A northwesterly swell was predicted to precede the front. After getting underway Monday morning and proceeding N on a reefed mainsail and no mizzen, I started to notice the NW swell building. I had a nice following breeze and enjoyed a 20-mile sleigh ride to Pavilion Key, almost arriving before Stevie. We were one day ahead of our reservation but I felt like we needed to be there for safety reasons since it offered what I thought to be the safest harbor for the coming blow. It was especially well protected on the north and west sides, where the wind was expected to blow the hardest.



Stevie "wearing" his kayak in Whitewater Bay.

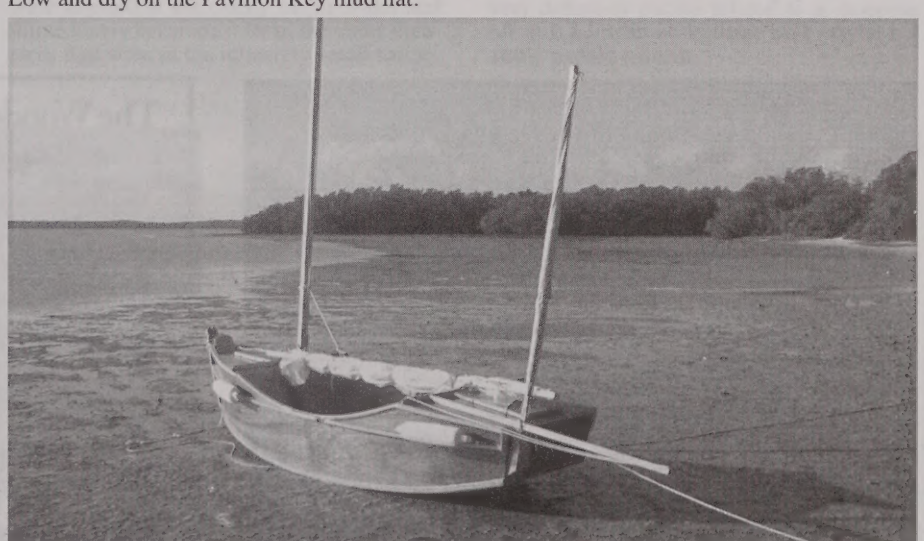
The water was very choppy and milky looking when we arrived, but the harbor and a grove of trees on the beach were welcoming. I anchored bow out and tied a line to the stern and on to the shore. The typical chalky mud flat let *JG* lay about 100' offshore floating on the half-tide and dried out on the low tide. We set up camp and enjoyed another couple hours of daylight. We did a little fishing to no avail although Stevie had caught four earlier in the day from his kayak, trolling a Rapala. I had trolled a spoon earlier that day as well but had no luck.

We had a small fire because wood was scarce here. We retired at 9:30pm with a moderate breeze blowing. I fell asleep quickly and awoke around midnight in what seemed like a gale. The undulating sound of waves breaking on the windward beach had turned into a continuous roar. The tents were flapping wildly and Stevie's tent was being blown flat against the ground with him in it. I wanted to check on the boats but was concerned my tent would blow away without me in it. When I went out to the beach with my flashlight I found the tide low and *JG* was high and dry and safe. She was also laying nicely in the lee of the grove of trees. To be safe I tied a second line to shore and removed the rudder to prevent the possibility of fouling with the lines. Checking on the kayak I found the paddle had blown 20' down the beach, below the tide line. It would have been gone on the morning's high tide.

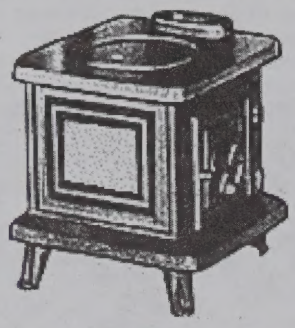
I went back to bed until about 3am when I got up again to look around. Things were OK. The wind howled through the rest of the night and most of Tuesday, a full day of rest and relaxation for the both of us after nine days of travel. It was a matter of waiting for the wind to subside and veer to the northeast. I enjoyed fishing, studying the charts and cooking. I wanted a day of leisure in this paradise after all our enjoyable but hard work of the previous week. Tomorrow would be our last day on the water traveling the last 12 miles back to civilization, riding the rising tide back up Sandfly Pass and into the canal to Everglades City.

Coming back to camp around 4pm with armloads of firewood, we spotted a sailboat approaching the sand spit on the point of Pavilion key 200 yards from our camp. Here came a Hobie Adventure Island kayak/trimaran on a tumultuous downwind run in a 15-20 knot breeze and 2'-3' foot seas,

Low and dry on the Pavilion Key mud flat.



TRADITIONAL MARINE STOVES



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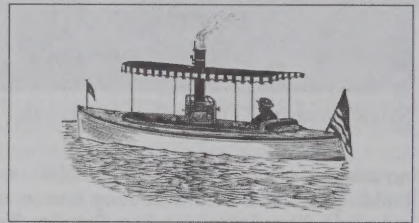
clearly overwhelmed by the conditions. Well, he was not alone and in the next 30 minutes three others arrived to join the first in making camp on the point. About 5:30pm Stevie and I ventured over to visit and sure enough, they reported equipment failure including a rudder. They were able to make repairs on the fly and make it to the beach. They were wet and tired but undaunted. Their plan was to continue on to Flamingo.

Wednesday morning we had a hot breakfast, packed up and were on the water shortly after dawn. One of our favorite camp conveniences was a one-quart stainless steel thermos. We could heat water when convenient and keep it boiling hot for 12-18 hours. This enabled us to have soup, coffee, oatmeal, tea or hot chocolate on short order. This was a great luxury to carry on the mother ship because it was a little too bulky for the kayak. It is also a good to have for use in treating hypothermia.

Our usual morning routine was taking us about two hours to get on the water. Because of our leisurely day before and our increased efficiency, we were on the water in about 1½ hours on the last day. Eating, dressing, packing up tents, sleeping bags, lunch, garbage, the boats, toilet duties, navigation planning, boat rigging were many of the morning duties. On the previous days, packing up the tents wet was unavoidable. We would unpack them in the afternoon in time to dry before dark.

Another day of fair breezes shot me to the head of Sandfly Pass in 2½ hours. There I had to wait for the tide to change. Stevie had gone on ahead as usual. I tried fishing some Gulp bait on a popping cork in the tidal creek but had no luck. Finally the tide changed and I got to Sandfly Island and met up with Stevie. We continued down the pass, crossed the shallow open water in front of the ranger station and then anchored to prepare the sails and mast for my last bridge clearance. Rowing the last mile together we completed our journey in 11 days. The trip total for *Jennifer Gayle* was 153 miles at an average speed underway of 2.6mph.

I felt a sense of accomplishment combined with a sadness to leave this fairy tale world. There is so much more here to see and learn. I did not want the journey to end and I did not want to leave this place behind. If it can happen, I will return.



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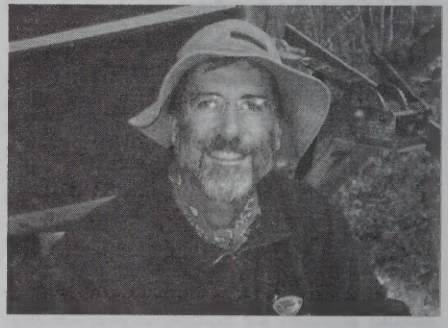
The author back home in the mountains of North Carolina.



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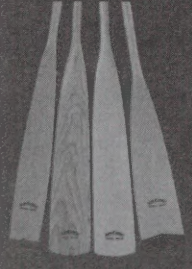

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Have Paddle Will Travel

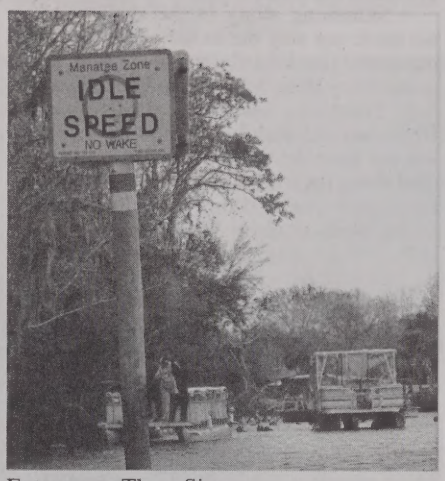
By Hugh McManus

After our previous day's paddle on Florida's Silver River (*MAIB* May) that lasted well after sunset, my paddle partner/wife Louise and I made plans for our next paddle. This one would focus on the King's Bay area of the Crystal River on the west coast of Florida.

I had recently learned that during the winter months, manatees make their way into King's Bay, which is fed by more than 30 natural springs. We had yet to experience manatees in the wild so we were especially looking forward to seeing these marine mammals that are sometimes also known as sea cows and weigh up a 1,000 lbs or more. Although manatees can tolerate water temps below 68° for short periods of time, they need warmer waters to avoid cold stress that has proven fatal to a fair number of these mammals in Florida and is the reason so many of them can be found in the King's Bay area. There they congregate in the Three Sister's Spring, a small (50'x250') sanctuary containing a number of underwater vents that warm the crystal clear waters to a constant 72°. There are times when over 200 manatees can be seen seeking the shelter in its warm waters.

Crystal River is approximately an hour's drive from Silver Springs. Once there we planned to scope out the area to find a put-in where we could launch our 21' double kayak and make our way to the Three Sisters. The best put in seemed to be at Hunter Spring State Park which was about 1.25 miles from the Three Sisters. That would allow us to access the King's Bay which contains several small islands and is designated as a National Wildlife Refuge. However, the weather forecast for the next day was for winds in excess of 20mph, so with that in mind we searched for another put-in that, if needed, would shorten our access paddle to the Three Sisters Spring. A website, "The Central Florida Kayak Trips" found at www.clubkayak.com/cfkt proved to be very helpful and we soon arrived at Pete's Pier Marina, where a $5 fee allowed us to park and launch at their ramp which was just under a mile from the Spring.

The next day proved the weather folks to be accurate as the winds were gusting to 25mph and with an air temperature of 42° there was little wonder why the manatees were seeking refuge. I was glad that I remembered to bring along my lightweight down pullover, however, that was quickly claimed by my paddling partner. After the unscheduled nocturnal paddle on the Silver River the other night dodging monkeys and alligators, I was apparently still in her debt so I gladly gave up the pullover in favor of an old poly top that would work just fine.



Entrance to Three Sisters.

We were off and after a short paddle through semi-open water we passed under a highway bridge and entered a canal that took us the entrance to the Three Sisters Spring. As we approached the entrance two pontoon boats came into view. There are a number of dive shops in Crystal River that offer "Swim with Manatees" tours and that's what was going on just off to the side of the entrance to the spring. As we got closer we began to see the manatees in the water and, for the most part, they were inside of a roped off area that set them apart from boaters and swimmers, almost like they knew it was a safe area for them. Some of these mammals were pretty large and Louise, who had previously asked about the possibility of them "bumping" the kayak, now was giving them a wary eye.

We made our way past the swimmers and their guides and headed into the spring entrance which was pretty narrow. A few of the swimmers were looking at us a little in awe with one comment from a guide that we had the "Cadillac of kayaks." Apparently they don't see too many 21' double sea kayaks at the Three Sisters Spring. A little maneuvering brought us past the upright steel pipes that blocked the entrance to motor boats of any size. Once inside the spring we were amazed at the clarity of the water and immediately became aware of the many manatees that were in the relatively small spring. I had read that tying up to or landing on shore was not permitted and there were signs there to reinforce that.

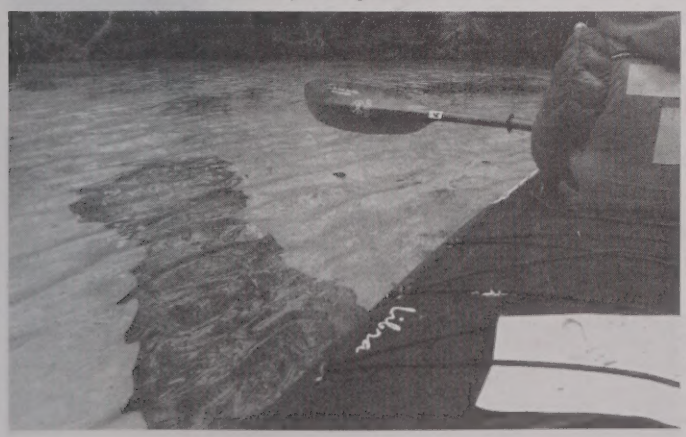
We paddled over to where two State and Fish Wildlife Officers were on duty and got the rules regarding what we could and couldn't do regarding any contact with the over 100 manatees in the spring. Mainly it was a case of not chasing the manatees around and no touching, after all they were there to rest. Nearly all the animals were sleeping on the bottom of the shallow (4'-18') waters and maybe a dozen or so were swimming on or just under the surface. A few were dragging electronic beacons behind them that had been attached to their backs by the Fish & Game folks to track their comings and goings. It was a little unnerving (I think that's the word Louise used) to see one of them pass just under the kayak. There were only two other people in the spring beside us and they were diving off a sit-on-top kayak.

I had originally planned to enter the water and try to take a few underwater photos of the manatees, but my bride didn't think too much of that plan. The water temperature, a balmy 72° was fine for swimming but the air temperature was still trying to reach 50°. Swimming didn't seem like a good idea. I had to be satisfied with reaching over the side and holding my daughter's 35mm waterproof camera down as far as I could, hoping that it was pointed in the right direction and more importantly the waterproof feature was as good as advertised some ten years prior when it was new.

After paddling from one end of the spring to the other we decided that it was time to move on and let the gentle herbivores sleep and rest, one of three things they spend the most time doing. The other two are eating (they eat 10% of their weight each day) and traveling. I suspect there are a couple of other things they find time to do, too, but it was time for us to travel as well so we headed back out the narrow inlet and returned to the put-in as we had reservations that night in Naples, Florida, some 245 miles to the south.

Whenever we set off on one of these paddling vacations I am reminded that regardless of the fact that we have a 21' kayak on top of the car and a bin full of assorted paddling gear, we will endeavor to also engage in some sort of alternative non-paddling activity. In the past some of those activities have not passed muster. I have been told that camping on a small island in the Maine Island Trail is very definitely paddle related as is stopping off at L.L. Bean at 4:30am, well maybe not 100% paddle related.

Manatee headed under the kayak, big isn't it!



Manatees resting on the bottom.

So, finding ourselves in Naples, Florida, with the next stop being Little Torch Key I thought we might have time for that obligatory side trip. For those who have found themselves in Naples, Florida, with a little time on their hands, consider a stop off at the National Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. The 11,000 acre tract is home to a diverse population of many birds, reptiles, mammals, native plants and trees. All can be seen from the 2.25-mile elevated walkway that winds itself through the marsh, cypress forest and pine upland. This was our second visit at Corkscrew and, aside from being a real treat, it has been certified as a bonafide non paddling activity in every respect.

Our next and last stop on our Florida vacation was Little Torch Key, located about 20 miles north of Key West, Florida. We had reservations at Parmer's Resort on Little Torch where we have stayed before. Not only is the resort central to our paddling destinations, it's also located right on the water as most things are in the Keys. Weather has to be the biggest consideration when planning a paddle in the Keys. In March it's not uncommon for cold fronts to push down into the Keys and bring strong winds with them, so it's important to be mindful of both the forecast and the current conditions.

We decided to launch into the Coupon Bight Aquatic Preserve from Long Beach on neighboring Big Pine Key. There we could paddle west to the end of the Bight and pass just inside of the Little Palm Island Resort and Spa which is known as Little Palm or LPI to the locals. The Bight is mostly made up of shallow grass flats with cut-throughs from the Bight out into the Atlantic Ocean shoreline.

It's not unusual to see any number of fish such as bonefish, grouper, sharks, stingrays, snappers and others. It's also a nesting area for sea turtles on the ocean side where coral patch reefs are found. Our youngest daughter taught at the nearby Newfound Harbor Marine Institute, where they offer programs in Marine Education for children and make use of the Aquatic Preserve on almost a daily basis. It's also where she met her husband, Craig, who was just out of culinary school and working as a chef at Little Palm Island, the midway destination for the day's paddle.

The put-in requires some timing, as there's not much of a tide range in this area and we don't want to be returning at low water. The beginning of the paddle requires making our way through the mangroves, being sure to remember where the put-in was, as it can be a little confusing. I had along our handheld GPS chart plotter that had a backtrack feature on it. There are a number of landmarks in the area so the GPS, while not essential, is still nice to have along.

Skimming along in the shallow water we made our way out to the ocean through a mangrove lined cut-through and came across several key deer, who are indigenous to the area. There are a handful of islands along the Bight, several with homes and docks reaching out past the shallow water. As we paddled along the rocky sponge flats, various fish came into view and the winds, blowing out of the north at about 15mph or so required us to stay in close to shore. That was one of the reasons why we selected this route, as it afforded us excellent protection from the wind. We saw a variety of shore birds along the way; white ibis, ospreys, great and little blue herons, least terns and a mixed flock of what appeared to be sanderlings and ruddy turnstones all made their appearance.

Key deer are only 3'-4' tall.

Soon we made our turn inside of Little Palm Island and headed back up the Bight to our put-in. The north wind was on our bow but the incoming tide helped a little bit with the paddling. Before long the put-in came into view and our ten mile paddle came to an end. Waiting for us next to our car was a Key deer, 3' tall, fully grown, on the endangered list and found only in the Keys. He apparently was looking for a handout. However, they should not be fed, as that only encourages them to approach cars which can result in an unhappy ending.

The north wind was still blowing the next day but a good thing about the Keys is that there's generally always a place to paddle in the lee out of the wind. We decided to try and combine two paddles into one. On Cudjoe Key there is a road that runs from Route 1 to a boat launch ramp that gives excellent access to the mangroves that surround the nearby keys and in among those mangroves a fair sized population of both fish and shore birds will be encountered.

The road that runs down to the boat ramp is Blimp Rd and it's called that for a reason. Since 1980 the US Government, namely the Air Force, has been deploying two blimp-like balloons called aerostats that are tethered to the ground and have onboard radar that track suspected drug carrying planes and boats in the Keys and beyond as well as broadcasting TV signals into Cuba. In the early '80s, not long after their deployment, one of the blimps broke loose in a storm and a fighter jet from the nearby Naval Air Station in Key West had to be called in to shoot it down to prevent it from ending up in Cuba with its sensitive radar equipment. The Key residents have dubbed the blimp "Fat Albert." Since they operate at heights up to 10,000' and are twice the size of the Goodyear Blimp, they serve as landmarks for boaters and by looking at the direction in which a blimp is pointing the wind direction can be readily determined.

We put in at the Blimp Rd ramp and paddled along the east shore of Cudjoe Key, making certain to stay well clear of the blimp base, and then cut into the mangroves where there is a narrow channel that in times of high water leads into the mangroves behind the blimp base. There it's not uncommon to find small sharks, as was the case that day. It's fascinating to see sharks, mostly bonnetheads and lemons, swimming inches away from our kayak. In addition to sharks, we saw barracudas, small tarpon, rays and a number of other small fish. We also had a needlefish about 18" long jump over our bow. My forward paddler cautioned me to stay clear of them in the future.

We wound our way through the mangroves and stayed clear of the large signs that warned people from coming too close to the US Government Blimp Base. I never got close enough to read what they said but had visions of seeing something about the use of deadly force had been authorized.

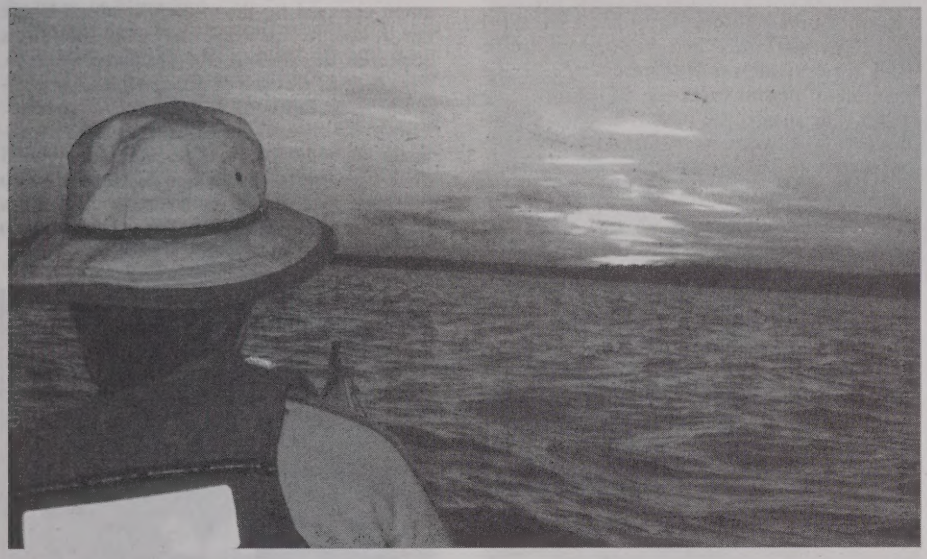
Leaving the blimp mangroves, we headed across Kemp Channel to Knockemdown Key. Some of the key names are really great; there's Ramrod, Rattlesnake, Big, Middle and Little Torch and No Name Keys. We caught a bit of the north wind as we made our way across the channel but as the day wore on the wind began to lay down and the water clarity improved.

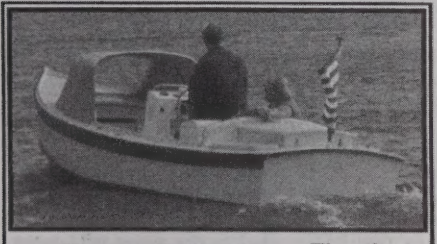
Skinny water in the Keys.

Fat Albert off to the left.

Soon we arrived in the shallow water of Knockemdown Key and began to see a number of rays and small sharks and at one point, while paddling parallel to the mangroves, we disturbed a large, 3' or more, barracuda that was between us and the mangroves and he swam right at the side of the kayak and as there couldn't have been more than 6" of water under us, I felt him squeeze right under my seat as he powered his way through. Lots of shorebirds were sighted and up high in the sky was a lone frigate bird on the prowl. Soon the setting sun was signaling an end to not only the day's paddle but to our Florida vacation.

Time to head home.





Handy Billy 21

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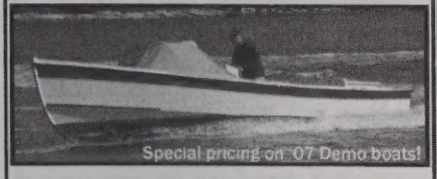
Cruising Speed, Quiet Conversation



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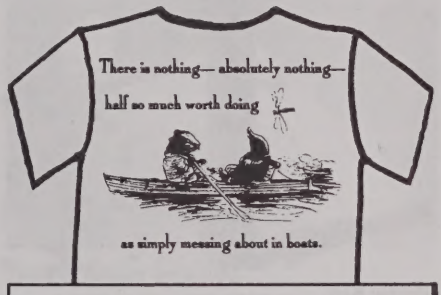

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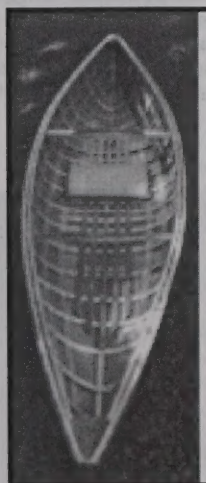

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Jitterbug Cruise 2011

By John Depa

Two years ago I enjoyed a six month cruise aboard my West Wight Potte 19, *Jitterbug*, launching from my home in New Jersey; down the ICW to Ft Lauderdale (two months), out to the Bahamas (six weeks) and then up the west coast of Florida to Ft Myers where we crossed through the Okefenokee Waterway to the East Coast for our return to New Jersey. Details of that cruise can be seen in back issues of *MAIB* or on the Internet at:

http://www.wwpotterowners.com/SailingStories44.html

http://www.wwpotterowners.com/SailingStories45.html

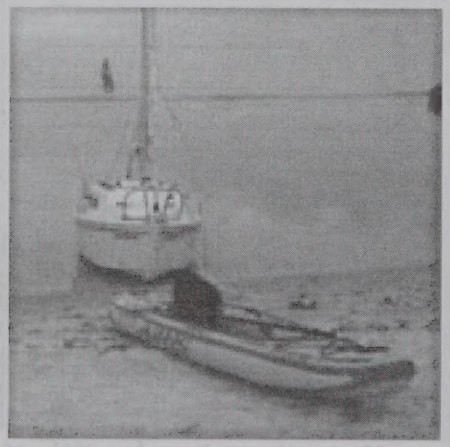
http://www.wwpotterowners.com/SailingStories46.html

This year I decided to take advantage of the Potter's trailerability, thus allowing us more time to leisurely cruise the warm Gulf Coast of Florida. I say "us" meaning *Jitterbug* and I, this was another solo cruise. I have no friends who are willing to sleep aboard a 19' sailboat for three months. The Northeast experienced a record level of snowfall, so on January 5, 2011, we were anxious to begin the 1,300 mile drive down I-95 to begin our warm weather adventure.

Snow in New Jersey.

After 3 days of hectic driving, I launched *Jitterbug* at the historic Rod & Gun Club located in Everglades City, FL. This is also the location of the west entrance to Everglades National Park (the east entrance, at Flamingo, is some 90 miles distant). I was meeting friends, later in the month, for five days of camping within the park boundaries so used the interim for a shake-out cruise in the Thousand Islands: All gear was in working order. An outstanding feature of the Potter is its ability to float in 8" of water with raised keel, thus allowing direct beach access. I also carry an inflatable Airies-10 for fishing/exploring small estuaries.

Jitterbug and her dinghy.



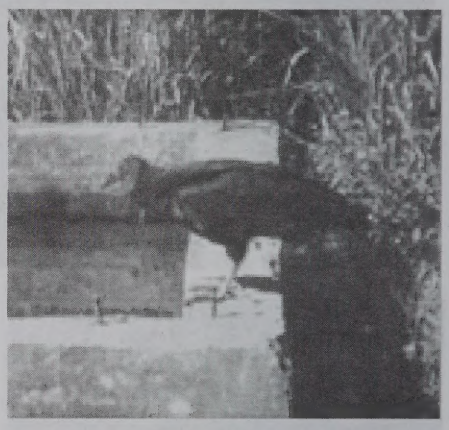
On January 17, I returned to Everglades City to meet my www.Southernpaddler.com buddies. They obtained a five-day ENP camping permit, while my permit included five days with them and an additional nine days for cruising on to Flamingo (Note: the maximum permit time is 14 consecutive days). The reason the park requires a camping permit is to ensure that a site is available upon your arrival. Numbers are liberal on the beach sites, but are limited to one party on the chickee sites. Every site has a portable toilet, which is well maintained by the "honey boat." A base camping permit is $10 and an additional $2 per day per person. So my 14-day permit only cost $38, which I feel is very reasonable.

Picnic Key.

Typical chickee.

Next morning we traveled to our first campsite, located on Jewel Key, about 14 miles distant. Mac and Chuck used a 14' skiff while Joe motored the beautiful "stripper" he built many years ago. After two days of camping/fishing on Jewel Key, we moved on to our next site, Picnic Key, which was only 12 miles away. Unfortunately, we were socked in with dense fog but my Garmin 540s GPS saved the day. It rained the first and last days of our stay, with lots of drizzle and dense fog in between. A detailed account of those five days can be viewed at:
http://www.southernpaddler.com/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=6&t=8309&sid=e9a511a87a1841d2c5a912b2dde3c81e.

On January 21, I bade farewell to my friends and spent the remainder of the cruise solo. The first day alone I sailed 15 miles to the Chatham River and a campsite known as Watson's Place, which was once a small sugar plantation. A very interesting story is told in the book *Killing Mr. Watson*, by Peter Matthiessen. It gives insight into the hardships endured by those early settlers. There are remnants of machinery and buildings scattered throughout the Thousand Islands. The area is devoid of fresh water, so rainwater was captured and stored in cisterns: These old cisterns continue to provide freshwater for wildlife. The campsite has a small dock and two picnic tables. During my two day stay, several guide boats stopped by for a lunch break, affording me an opportunity to get the latest fishing info.

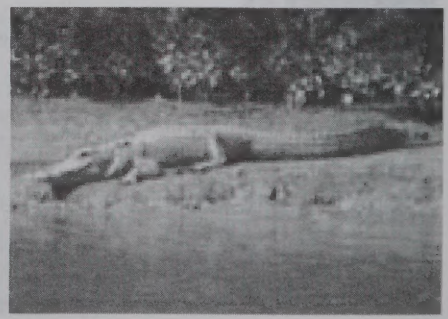


Water cistern at Watson's Place.

From the Chatham River we sailed on a dead run to New Turkey Key. This is a small key that has eroded to the point of becoming two separate islands at mid tide, but it has deep water access at one end which makes landing easy. I spent two nights there, fishing and exploring nearby keys during the day. There was never a problem catching enough fish for the table. On average, I probably enjoyed a fresh fish dinner three times per week.

Next stop was Ponce De Leon Bay, which is the mouth of Shark River, and provides a deep water, sheltered anchorage. It is a favored destination for cruisers making the 60-mile crossing to/from Key West. One morning I paddled the Airies-10 up little Graveyard Creek and spotted a saltwater crocodile sunning on the mud bank. They are much less numerous than freshwater alligators, so I later got a positive ID from a Flamingo Park Ranger. I estimated this one at 10'-12', which is "respectable." Since I was paddling a 10' rubber kayak, he certainly got my respect!!

Saltwater crocodile.



The next 20 miles to Flamingo is a series of beautiful, long, desolate beaches, the most notable being Cape Sable. Since there is little shelter, this area is rarely frequented by sail or powerboats. But *Jitterbug* was right at home, affording me miles and miles of private beachcombing territory. I spent the next five days slowly working my way along the beaches to Flamingo.

Jitterbug carries nine one-gallon jugs of drinking water and another 16 gallons is stored in a bladder tank, so we still had an ample supply. Upon entering the marina at Flamingo, I was struck by the absence of boats. In fact, the only boat moored for the night was (of all things) another Potter 19! The boat was *Serenity*, owned by Pat Sammons of Georgia, who was there for a week of solo sailing. He and I had a lengthy conversation, which was of mutual benefit. I had planned to spend the night, but Pat was leaving that afternoon so I did the same.

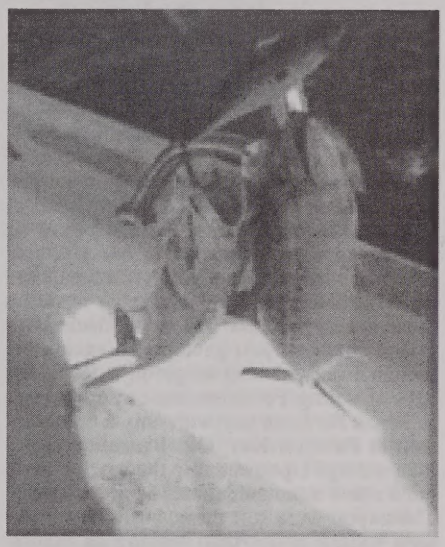
After replenishing the water supply, taking a long, hot shower and making some phone calls (there is no cell phone service throughout much of the park's interior) I back tracked 12 miles to East Cape, which was to be my launch point for crossing Florida Bay, to Key West. A direct crossing is about 55 miles but I elected to sail a dogleg route to Snipe Key (40 miles) and then on to Key West (25 miles). The additional mileage is justified because I don't relish the prospect of a 12-14 hour watch at the tiller and I try to spend as little time as possible on open, exposed waters. I was cruising in the strictest sense of the word, with no specific destinations or timetable, "retired and on vacation."

We crossed on February 1 with breezes that allowed us to sail most of the way, but I was forced to start the outboard when the wind died and boat speed dropped to under 2mph. I located a few interesting coves near Snipe Key and spent an extra two days in the area. Upon arrival at Key West, I rented a slip for five nights at Garrison Bight City Marina. It was time to roll up the kayak and get out the folding bike, a Dahon Curve model. Both the bike and the kayak easily store in *Jitterbug's* starboard sleeping berth. Key West was a welcome change after three weeks of solo cruising in remote areas. I was ready for a little "civilization" time; dinners on Duval Street, bikini watching on the beach and nightly entertainment at Malory Square, not a bad way to spend a week, or longer.

Located between Key West and the Dry Tortugas, lay a string of uninhabited keys that are part of a National Sanctuary. Several of these keys have long, white beaches that are open to the public. They became my next destination. A favorable wind allowed *Jitterbug* to sail 13 miles, to Boca Grande Key, in just three hours, which is moving for a heavily loaded Potter. Being located so near to civilization, this key sees a lot of day traffic from power boats seeking a bit of privacy and guideboats fishing the flats. A steep dropoff allowed me to beach *Jitterbug*.

We remained for several days before sailing 12 additional miles to reach the Marquesas Keys. This set of keys forms an atoll and are situated far enough from Key West to discourage most day trippers. Only a few cruisers and professional crab boats anchored in the lee of the island during the five days that I spent there. Fishing was fantastic!! This photo is not digitally altered, the Spanish mackerel and jack both hit the lure at the same time.

Beach combing.



Double header on a lure.

The return to Key West was hampered by dead-on-the-nose winds, so I used the opportunity to troll the reef under power, catching many fish along the way. Rather than return directly to a marina, we anchored just off Key West, by Wisteria Island, for two days. Many, many cruisers, and some year-round squatters, anchor here. During the peak season it resembles a floating city. There is a dinghy dock in the harbor and a pump-out boat makes weekly rounds to empty holding tanks. A few sailors stopped by to chat, which is always interesting conversation. I then returned to the marina, there to await winds favorable for again crossing Florida Bay, this time back to the mainland. Four days later, on February 22, I was again walking the pristine beaches of Cape Sable.

Next day we sailed back to Shark River where *Jitterbug* would be protected from any threatening weather. Upon arrival at the bay, I noted both stingrays and tarpon making spectacular leaps, presumably as part of a mating ritual. I was very keen to land a tarpon so spent the next three days giving it my best shot. Without live bait, which most of the guideboats use, my only recourse was to make hundreds of casts with a variety of artificial lures. The net result for all of that effort was two hook-ups over a three-day period; one spit the lure on the first leap and the second broke the line. By the end of that third day I was totally exhausted from casting those large baits and conceded to the tarpon, but just for now.

Time for a change of scenery and the city of Naples seemed like just the ticket. After plotting a course, I vowed to sail the entire distance, no motor. *Jitterbug* made 23 miles the first day, to New Turkey Key, and 24 the second, to Picnic Key. On the third day we caught a perfect breeze that enabled a 36-mile direct course to Gordon Pass, the entrance to Naples. *Jitterbug* loves the Gulf waters! We rented a slip at the City Marina for four nights. Unfortunately, they impose a minimum fee which is for a boat length of 30', so little *Jitterbug* was charged the same rate as the larger boats, $47 per night.

Naples is an upscale community of large homes with immaculate landscaping; every lawn looks like a putting green. The city offers four-star dining, a fabulous fishing pier, clean beaches and exclusive shopping. I thoroughly enjoyed the stay, taking long bike rides and beach walks daily. I also enjoyed

Miles of beach.

breakfast and dinner at two of my favorite little restaurants: Steak and eggs were a welcome change from my diet of fish, rice and noodles. One day I had a chance meeting with new Potter owner, Harry De Marco, who had just purchased a used 19' version. He was kind enough to invite me to use the boat dock at his home, but I never traveled that far north.

Naples enforces a maximum stay for live-aboards of four consecutive days, so on March 4 we set sail towards Ft Myers. *Jitterbug* was still blessed by the wind gods and easily sailed 20 miles up the Gulf coast to arrive at Lover's Key State Park by mid-afternoon. This is one of my favorite cruising locations. It is located on the south side of Big Carlos Pass, across from Ft Myers Beach (Estero Island). There are deep anchorages at both ends of the island, while mid-island is accessible by auto from the mainland. Needless to say, it gets somewhat crowded on weekends and I happened to arrive on a Saturday; but it's a fun crowd, a mix of bathers and fisherman. The mile long beach is a pleasure to walk because there are toilets and a concession stand at the midway point; nice stop to enjoy an ice cream. The backside of the island is a maze of mangrove coves and fishing is excellent. We anchored there for two nights before continuing on.

It took two more days to reach Ft Myers. We sailed 17 miles the first day to anchor at Shell Point, then motored up the Caloosahatchee River on the second day. This is the beginning of the Okechobee Waterway, which cuts across the state to the east coast. I might mention that the Waterway locks closed, late in March, due to severe drought conditions. During our entire three month cruise it only rained two days; January 17 and January 21, the days my camping buddies arrived and departed. Another reason to travel solo?

Ft Myers City Marina does not apply the dreaded 30' minimum docking fee, so expenses for small craft are much less. The downtown section had suffered an economic decline but is slowly being rejuvenated, now featuring a number of new restaurants and art galleries. But of course the most famous attraction is Thomas Edison's home and laboratory. I enjoyed a four day visit of bike riding, a live theatre show and a bus trip to Ft Myers Beach, which was mobbed with the college spring break crowd. Another highlight was meeting yet a third new Potter owner, Melissa Butler, who visited us at the dock to deliver a "Welcome" gift of Florida citrus fruit and impart some local knowledge. Small craft sailors in general are unique individuals, and Potter People in particular are among the most interesting I have ever met. No couch potatoes here!

By March 12 it was time to begin our return trip and we navigated all the way back to Lover's Key in a single day, this time anchoring at the south end of the island, in New Pass. The fixed bridge over the Pass has a clearance of 30', which *Jitterbug* can sneak under with her 27' mast height. Fishing was good for both sheephead and sea trout so we stayed three days before moving on to spend another few days in Naples.

From Naples I elected to take the coastal route, so we stayed just off Keewaydin Island; the southern end of which is Rookery Key Reserve. There is a great anchorage on the backside that is very popular with cruisers and power boats alike, quite a contrast to the beaches in the Everglades!

Next stop was beautiful Cape Romano, which lies south of Marco Island. At one time this area was destined to become another playground for the wealthy, and a few beachfront homes were constructed at great expense. But (fortunately) Mother Nature had other ideas and the end of the island was severely eroded during a hurricane. One of the homes still stands as a stark reminder. The entire area is now a state park but is much less crowded than parks located closer to densely populated areas.

Since leaving the Shark River area I had often recalled the spectacular leaps made by those briefly hooked tarpon, so decided to give it another try. It gave me an excuse (as though I needed one) to get in a few extra days of sailing. Fresh breezes carried us back to Ponce De Leon bay with only a one-night stop at Pavilion Key. Did I mention that I love sailing? Upon entering the bay I noticed quite a few more guideboats fishing the area. The tarpon were still there, but were mostly seen rolling rather than leaping as before. After one full day of fruitless effort, I was getting a bit discouraged.

Early morning on the second day the water was mirror-glass calm, which made it easier to spot rolling fish. A small skiff arrived and the lone occupant began casting a fly rod. I figured his chances at about the same odds as me hitting the millionaire lottery. Well, a short time later he hooked a huge tarpon and I spent the next hour watching (from a respectful distance) him battle that fish, leap after spectacular leap. He was finally able to bring it alongside the boat and remove the hook without ever taking the fish out of the water. He was one happy dude, letting out a loud YES! and pumping his arms in victory.

I was happy for him and resumed fishing with renewed enthusiasm but alas, with little reward. Two more days of concerted effort only resulted in two hooked fish, both of which spit the lure on their first jump. Total tally: Tarpon-4 John-0. Just wait until next time!

Entering the last week of March, it was time to return to our starting point, Everglades City. We moved at a slow pace, relying 100% on sail power and spending several nights anchored off various keys. The leisurely pace allowed time for reflection of the past three months, one subject being wildlife encounters. Bottle nosed dolphins were constant companions, often playing at *Jitterbug's* bow, and high diving osprey were also a daily sight. Lesser seen, but not uncommon, were manatee and bald eagles. And of course there were the spectacular leaps of manta rays and tarpon, along with the occasional sighting of a black tip shark. Shore birds are too numerous to mention, but I will note that the pelicans are becoming much more aggressive, especially while one is cleaning fish.

Another observation is the people one meets during such a trip. They ran the gamut from canoe/kayak campers to cruisers of luxury yachts. It struck me that the more expensive the boat, the less interesting, and adventuresome its occupants. Those plying the waters in small craft (under 20') talked of wildlife encounters and personal experience, while the "yachties" seemed more concerned with distance traveled and electronic gadgetry.

Cape Romano.

Rookery Key.

Over the past five years I have been involved in sailing canoe races with a group of devoted ACA members. I thoroughly enjoy the sport so was delighted to see a variety of such craft in the area; all seemed to be on multi-day trips, en route to their next campsite. To my way of thinking, the Potter 19 seems an ideal compromise between paddling and power yachting. It is trailerable, small enough to explore minor tributaries and her board up, shallow draft permits direct beach access, while the spacious cabin provides protection from the elements and biting insects. I slept comfortably aboard *Jitterbug* every night of the cruise.

After cruising well over 1,000 miles, *Jitterbug* was loaded onto her trailer March 29 and we arrived home on April 1 with lots of fond memories. Until next time...

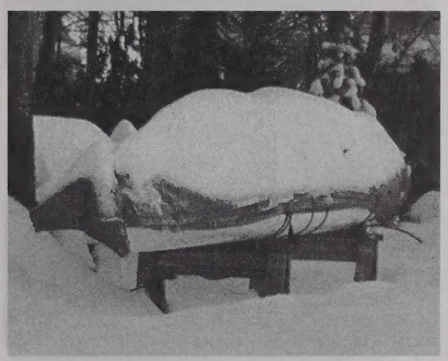
Florida Paddling 2011

A New Englander's Guide

By Stan Kruszenski

I have been to Florida several times in the past; beaches, football games, business, pleasure, Daytona, Disney, the Keys and Everglades... but this trip, themed around paddling destinations planned for a sampling of the different kinds of places (coastal bays, estuaries, rivers and springs) was, for me, the "real Florida". Being a large peninsula, Florida can naturally be expected to have a lot of coastline; what's not so well known are the numerous springs (highest concentration of 1st magnitude springs (>64 million gal/day) in the world, creeks, rivers and lakes which are navigable, often interconnected by canals. This geography, combined with history which predates our old New England and a natural world quite different from the wildness we're accustomed to, makes for a very enjoyable and enlightening trip. Ponce De Leone may not have found the Fountain of Youth, but a tour here gives good reason why it's a logical place to look!

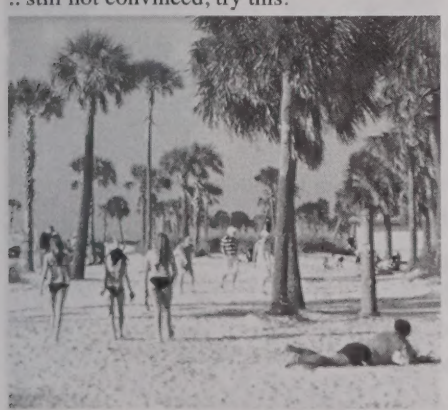
If you need further motivation to paddle Florida, consider:



The snow we had to dig the boat out of,

...and compare it with this.

.. still not convinced, try this.



Our inspiration for this trip was our friend, Charlie, who has paddled Florida several times and convinced us through his descriptions and photos. I found these links particularly helpful for planning:

Florida's Designated Paddling Trails: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/guide/paddle.htm

Central Florida Kayak Trips: http://www.clubkayak.com/cfkt/trips/index.htmi

Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail: http:www.dep.state.fl.us.gwt/paddling/saltwater.htm

When considering paddling in Florida, I suggest considering several aspects which differ from our northeast experience:

State parks are woven into many of the best paddling destinations. Many have camping, some have "cabins", free-standing cottages, bungalows and cabins, which rival good motels in price and usually sleep six comfortably with well equipped kitchens. The advantage to being in the parks is that most are open from around 8am to 5pm or maybe sunset. Since desired paddling may carry beyond those hours and since early morning and evening are the best times for wildlife watching, staying in the park will assure the best opportunity to launch, land, walk and watch conveniently.

Here's a link to Florida's Parks: http://www.floridastateparks.org

Reservations are made through Reserve America: http://www.reserveamerica.com/

Heed warnings about navigation in mangrove "swamps". They form a far more complex network of ways than anything we're familiar with and everything looks alike when trying to find the way back! They are a prominent feature along brackish waters and coastal regions of south and central Florida. A ranger at "Ding" Darting National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island cautioned that even rangers and biologists get disoriented and often resort to flagging on their way out. Likewise for coastal marshes. They're a great place to observe shorebirds but are far more expansive than we're accustomed to and contain many side channels and dead ends, natural and manmade, which form a confusing labyrinth when trying to find the way out.

The natural dangers include alligators which aren't really dangerous if kept at a distance, especially with children and pets along. Keep hands and feet in the boat and take "swim at your own risk" seriously. Alligators are quick but don't move very far to chase prey and they ideally like something that's bite size and can swallow in only a few gulps. Still, they have powerful jaws and I was never able to find out what the best defense is if one has your leg tightly clenched in its sharp teeth... where to stab, kick, or gouge.

Other dangers include several poisonous snakes including rattlers, coral, copperheads and cottonmouths, which are known to fall out of trees into boats, The Florida panther, though endangered, is seen quite a bit, even as elusive as they are. Take the same precautions as with mountain lions.

There are a number of outfitters to provide boats, gear and possibly shuttles. There are well over 100 in Florida, billed as the "paddling capital of the world". Depending on one's mode of transportation and how much affection one has for one's own boat, it may pay to rent rather than haul (which typically subtracts 2-3mpg in gas consumption). The economics of renting, if not the convenience, might make sense. I'd also add that paddlers are generally quite welcome here... anything that draws visitors of any stripe is welcome... and most places are very accommodating to boating, whether it be power, sail or manual.

One more thing. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree and the progeny of pirates still prowl, so it makes sense to perform due diligence and be careful where a vehicle is left on overnight trips. I've had no bad experience in this regard but some sources caution about it.

Our trip was a "lollipop loop", down 1-95 to Daytona, westward across the state to the Gulf of Mexico, down the Gulf Coast to the Everglades, back across the state to 1-95 near West Palm Beach, then north. Lasting three weeks it covered a lot of distance but it was designed to get a taste and familiarity for a wide variety of paddling opportunities. Here are some highlights.

Tomoka State Park

We drove from the Boston area, leaving on Sunday morning, by Tuesday afternoon we were paddling the Tomoka River, Strickland Creek and Tomoka Basin on the Halifax River, part of the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW). This sunny February day there were no boaters, just a few fishermen, but it could be a busier waterway in warmer weather and weekends. Venturing in the basin one must be cautious of the tides, mud flats, and winds. There is a lot to explore upstream instead, a welcoming taste of Florida to stretch out in after two days of driving. Located just north of Daytona Beach, other nearby paddles include Bulow Creek and Pellicer Creek. An eight-mile end-to-end, through quiet creek, ICW and open bay, from Bulow Creek to Tomoka River is possible with a car spot. There is an outfitter at Tomoka State Park.

Blue Springs State Park

This spring produces 100 million gallons of crystal clear water per day at a constant 72'F which draws a variety of fish in the winter, not to mention manatees. It is about a mile between the spring and the St. Johns River and along that run is a walkway with several observation decks, from where I counted thirty manatees at once during the three walks in the afternoon, at dark and before sunrise. My morning walk was highlighted by two manatees apparently poking at, or teasing, a 6' alligator. The run resembles a fish hatchery, just loaded with gar, tarpon, and numerous other varieties. There is an outfitter and launch at the outlet of the run and another launch just outside the Park. We were content to explore the nearby St. Johns and lagoon but a thirteen-mile circumnavigation of Hontoon Island, a state park with camping facilities accessible only by boat, is feasible.

Monet morning on Blue Spring Run.

Juniper Spring

This is part of Ocala National Forest and has a campground. We arrived too late to paddle but there is an interesting seven-mile end-to-end. Outfitters will return persons (and their own boats if they have them) to the launch. It's about a half mile to the launch, then about 2 miles of narrow, shallow crystal clear waters, then expanding to about 20-30 yards wide through wilderness and small bluffs to a takeout on a state Rt. 19. The nature trail is worth the walk and offers a few peeks at the river trail.

Silver River State Park

Not to be confused with nearby Silver Springs Theme Park at the headwaters, this Park has camping and cabin accommodations. It is nearly a half-mile portage over level graded trail or a kayak or canoe can be rented through the Park (boats at launch, rent at entrance gate). This is another clear and wild river that can be paddled upstream a couple miles and then, if a car has ben spotted, 4 miles downstream to Ocala Boat Basin on state Rt. 40. The unique features of this paddle are the monkeys! A handful of monkeys escaped during the filming of a movie many years ago and they've now established a couple of colonies which are usually pretty obvious while paddling past them.

Of course, there's been a controversy; wildlife biologists want to remove them, others want to keep them. The argument for removing them is they're not indigenous... which means, if followed to its logical conclusion, then we should all get out! Personally, I admit these monkeys could become a nuisance but I'd focus on getting rid of pythons first for they're far more dangerous to humans and predators of many desirable indigenous species.

Crystal River

This is on the Gulf of Mexico about 50 miles west of Silver Spring. I only mention it because it is one place where outfitters will provide wetsuits for snorkeling or diving and legally swimming with the manatees. There are several paddling opportunities nearby.

Anclote Key Preserve State Park

This beautiful undeveloped island is located in the Gulf of Mexico near Tarpon Springs and offers free camping on the north end of the island. It is about three miles long by a half-mile wide,. The nearest launch for a daytrip three miles to the south end of the island, is from the causeway at Howard County Park. The best access to the north end of the island and an overnight trip is at Anclote Gulf Park, four miles to the island. This paddle is across exposed waters of the bay and during boating season there is a lot of traffic. We stayed close to Howard Beach since we didn't schedule time enough to do a longer trip; there is little to recommend unless planning to go out to the island but Howard Beach is very clean, good restrooms, plenty of parking and free.

Fort DeSoto County Park

We paid $.85 in bridge tolls to get to and use this park where I was told by a ranger that launching can be done anywhere a boat can be gotten from the car to the water. It is located near Tampa/St.Pete. There is an outfitter where parking and launching is also permitted. We launched at a quiet spot near the park road along Soldiers Hole and paddled out into Mullet Key (the actual name of this island) Bayou. The mullets were jumping enthusiastically all around us... I expect the osprey appreciate this behavior.

There is a canoe trail and the guide book provided at the visitor center is a concise but informative description of what can to be seen. After we landed we were treated to a ten-minute display of dolphins frolicking about in the water in front of the car. In the other direction we were treated to a beautiful sunset. This, as at many Gulfside Parks, closes at dark, the sunsets being too beautiful to deny visitors the full enjoyment. Charlie had highly recommended this park and I agree. There are numerous paddle options depending on the wind. There is a campground, too.

Fort DeSoto sunset.

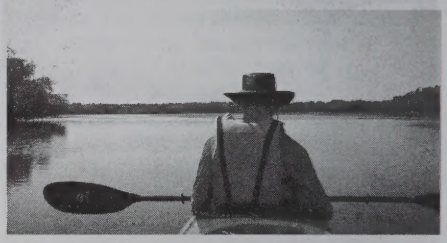
Myakka State Park

Located near Sarasota, this park has camping, vintage CCC cabins, nature walks and trails, including a tree canopy walkway and 70' observation tower, an outfitter of course, and a very educational visitor center. There are a few places to launch but watch out for alligators. We stopped to watch three alligators, two in the water and a very large one on the shore, as paddlers approached coming down the Myakka River. The two in the water submerged and disappeared, the one on the beach just lay there. For all their size and intimidating appearance, alligators only have brains the size of two olives... apparently one is for catching food, the other for reproduction... I lost all respect for them knowing they are laying around thinking about nothing but food and sex! Which olive are you using today?

Blackwater River
Collier-Seminole State Park

This park is located between Naples and the Everglades and the paddle through mangroves is quintessential southwest Florida. A thirteen-mile loop is possible as the river splits a couple of miles downstream from the launch but be careful, rangers have had to rescue boaters who get lost trying to find the way back from the bay through the mangroves and others who ignore the tides and get stuck on the flats in Mud Pond, an otherwise beautiful place, to observe a colorful multitude of waterfowl. Outside the river there is the 10,000 Islands Aquatic Preserve. A float plan filed at the gate is required. Boats are available to rent at the launch. There is a campground here and a primitive remote campsite downstream. We'd paddle here again.

Blackwater River mangroves:



Mud Pond.

Florida Panther
National Wildlife Refuge

This refuge is located just north of Everglades City at I-75 Exit 80 and I mention it because it was a most interesting 1½ mile walk. When we arrived, a red tailed hawk stood like a sentinel over the parking lot. A short distance down the trail we found the remains of a raccoon, a bit of tail fur and some bones. Raccoons are Florida panther prey. Later we came across a 5' snake which we could not identify until later, a yellow rat snake. Harmless but occupying the entire width of the path, and more, we yielded the right of way. Then we came across a fresh pile of black bear scat and not long afterwards, a black bear which watched us for a while through the saw palmetto, palms and other trees. Then we came across several white tailed deer.

Path in Florida Panther NWR.

Loxahatchee Wild & Scenic River Jonathon Dickinson State Park

Southeast Florida is more heavily populated and developed than the rest of the state and, notwithstanding the agreeable climate and scenery, there are fewer "pristine" places to paddle. The Loxahatchee River, upstream from Jonathon Dickinson State Park, which is near Hobe Sound, offers this opportunity. There is an outfitter at the launch. Boats rented here, us of which is limited to the Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site, four-miles upstream. There is also a sightseeing boat which comes this far. The paddle is a beautiful and unique mix of mangroves, pines, palms and cypress. Downstream from the launch the river soon becomes developed and more heavily used by boats.

This trip should not be confused with the five-mile paddle loop at Arthur Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, some forty-miles to the south near West Palm Beach. We did not visit this location but I understand it is quite different, more closely resembling the comparatively barren saw grass marshes scattered with tree islands and more naturally similar to the Everglades.

Amelia Island

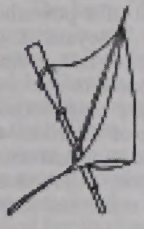
This is located on the Atlantic 20 miles northeast of Jacksonville, the most northern island in Florida and my favorite in general. It's been under eight flags in over 500 years of history. The oldest saloon in Florida, The Palace, is located here in the heart of old Fernandina Beach, a block from a genuine mix of working and recreational waterfront. Most paddling is in the extensive marshes, backwaters and Amelia River which separates this island from the mainland.

There are at least five launch possibilities; the beach at Amelia Island State Park on the Nassau River just around the corner from the open ocean; Kayak Amelia on Talbot Island; Big Talbot Island State Park; Walkers Landing in Amelia Island Plantation; and Egan's Creek near Fernandina Beach ($5 fee includes facilities and fresh water to wash down the boat). I had read of a launch at Fort Clinch State Park but they apparently don't allow put-in anywhere in the park. We explored the marsh along Egan's Creek and learned that the route changes its appearance as well as its depth quickly once the tide turns! We had visions of the *African Queen*, stuck in the mud within yards of our destination... but we made it back in time for another sunset tailgate.

Cumberland Island National Seashore

Access to this island is from St. Marys, GA. It is a treasure of wildlife and history. The main attraction for me are the wild horses, but alligators, wild hogs, armadillos and numerous shorebirds, permanent and migratory, abound here. There is also a fine inn, Greyfield, accessible from Fernandina Beach. The island has campsites, trails, biking and beaches and is worth a visit. The only paddling is from the inn.

Wild horses at Dungeness ruins:



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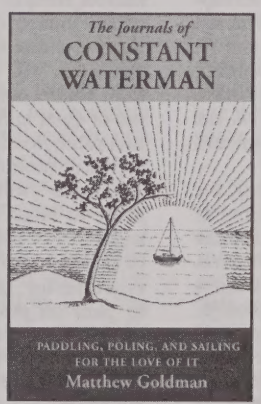

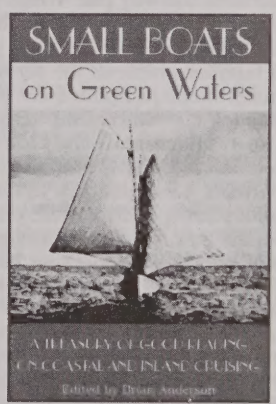

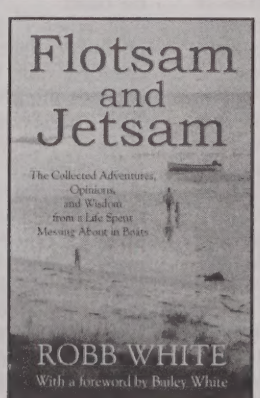
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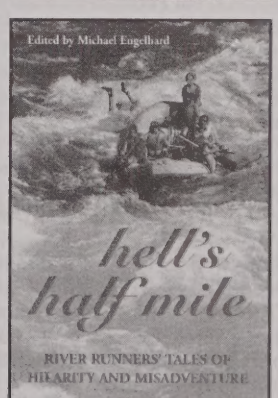
With a foreword by Bailey White



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Cape Cod Harbors

Cruising to a Special Landing

By Rob Gogan
rob.gogan@gmail.com
Photos by Ruth Bates

Cape Girl, one of many Mattapoisett majesties.

I grew up spending summers on the eastern shore of Buzzards Bay, south of the Cape Cod Canal. We sailed mostly in Red Brook, Squeteague, Megansett and Pocasset Harbors. Occasionally we crossed the Bay to Marion, a sailor's mecca with a forest of masts from hundreds of moored racing and cruising yachts, large and small. The town of Mattapoissett, a couple of miles southwest of Marion, always intrigued us because of its proud boat building heritage, and the fact that its residents proudly show off their credo on bumper stickers: "MATTAPOISETT: IT'S SPECIAL." Its Wampanoag name, "a place of resting," appealed to us as well.

I had read several times about the harbor there (see, for instance, Harry Mote's write-up of the Stone Horse Boat Builder's Race in "E&D Boatyard Party", *Shallow Water Sailors #151*, reprinted in *MAIB*), home of the storied builders Edey and Duff. Cruising sailors had also told me that Mattapoisett, like Marion, was friendlier to sailboats than to powerboats. Trouble was, with the prevailing southwesterly that blew all summer, it was just a little too far for a day sail from our east-side harbors in our Beetle Cat, Bullseye or Herreshoff 12½. When I got the Micro, a Bolger-designed cruiser, Mattpoisett was one of those places now within my reach for an overnight. So one summer when other obligations had been met, I launched for that "Special" harbor.

Delayed Launch

We had visitors at the White House, my mother's rented farmhouse, who kept me from launching until after lunch. The breeze was pretty strong, a classic southwesterly, 15 knots or so gusting up to 20; visibility a little hazy. I shoved off the mooring and pointed into the breeze with full sail. I was about two thirds of the way past Wings Neck, dipping and diving into the chop, when I heard a loud "pop" and saw the main go limp. It was a familiar problem: the screws holding the snotter block had pulled out of the mast. The snotter line adjusts the tension of the main spar, which pulls the clew sternward and determines the shape of the main.

Without being attached to the mast, the spar slides down and forward, protruding in front of the bow about half its length, and the mainsail wrinkles up to about half its area. This had happened to me before and I knew I could still sail limply. To repair it, though, I'd need to stand up on the mast step and put in two thicker or longer screws. I had some brass, bronze and stainless hardware belowdecks, but I couldn't do the fix offshore in such choppy conditions. I briefly considered sailing back to the White House landlord's dock, but that seemed like a defeat.

On the other hand, there was a public landing with a decent temporary tie-up spot at the head of the Pocasset River at the base of Wing's Neck. This would set me back less than a nautical mile, while going back would cost two each way. So I limped on a beam reach back towards shore with my sprit wobbling well forward of where it belonged, most embarrassingly un-ship-shape.

The long jetties at the mouth of the Pocasset offered shelter where I could tidy up the sprit and mainsail and set up for rowing up the river. I kept the mizzen up as it was harder to unrig than the main. In addition, having the mizzen up helped me to keep headed upwind. If I needed to heave to and raise the main again for any reason, having the mizzen up would give me much better control. Besides, there probably wouldn't be enough of a contrary wind in the lee of the riverbanks for the little mizzen to be a hindrance.

Rowing up the Channel

Navigating the crowded little channel was a bit of a challenge without a motor. The wind got fluky between the tall banks of the narrow stream, sometimes catching the abundant windage of the Micro in unpredictable ways to slide us off course. The river's other challenge was moorings. Depending on the tide, boats could be riding close to the channel or even in the center of it. Though I had a favorable flood tide, I needed to keep enough forward momentum to maintain steerage. The wide sweeps spanned nearly 20' from blade to blade and there were times we had to pass so close to a moored boat that I had to lift an oar to clear a gunwale, buoy or outboard motor. In such narrow passages, I had to plan on pulling with only one oar, so I directed our momentum in such a way that I would need two or three pulls of the free oar to maintain the desired course while I raised the other.

When I got to the landing raft, I was glad to see that it was vacant, not only in the seaward side, but also the narrow channel between the floating raft and the stone wharf where most other boats could not go. Tucked in there, I could work on the Micro without feeling rushed to get out of the landing to make way for drop-offs and pickups. Once I tied up to the dock, the bow transom snubbed up to the inner dock corners securely, I rummaged around in my old Official Boy Scout knapsack where I kept my tools and hardware. I found two good screws, one a flathead silicon bronze maybe a bit too short but stout, and a brass round-head plenty long.

I put the screws into the waistband of my shorts within easy reach, opened up the flat screwdriver blade of my Leatherman multi-tool, grabbed the mast, and climbed the steps in the bow transom. I was happy that the block still had the snotter "halyard" line threaded through. Though it was limp and disconnected from the mast, the line was still securely tied to the head of the spar. The limp line didn't prevent the block from getting dunked, but kept it from going down. One of the screws was gone, but the other was still in place.

I pulled out the two screws from my waistband and compared them to the one in the block. The block screw was narrower than one but ½" shorter than the other. I put the block in place, aligned the long screw with the top hole, and found the old hole in the mast. It turned in and pressed against the wood gratifyingly, getting tighter towards the end of the screw. It felt like I was pressing deeper than the old hole into undrilled wood, good, I thought, now it will hold.

The second screw was trickier, since it was wider than the old hole. I decided I'd need to make a new hole slightly askew of the old one. I climbed back down and got my screw starter tool from the knapsack. Shaped like a screwdriver, the hand-driven tool could sink a 1"deep, ¼" wide hole into all but the hardest woods. With the tool, I reamed out a new hole that took the lower screw and held it well. I strained but did not strip the bronze on the head as I tightened the last turns. The block was now at least as secure as it ever was and the mast seemed no worse for the wear. Thanks, designer Phil Bolger and builder David Jost for hand-tool patchable wooden spars. A mast of wood is heavier than aluminum, but much friendlier to amateur boaters who want to keep cruising after equipment failures!

All A-taunto in Tahanto

As I worked, a car drove up to the parking lot and several people walked out onto the raft with a cooler and some other gear. From their conversation, I gathered that they were waiting for the arrival of a powerboat to take them to Martha's Vineyard. I got the main re-rigged, the snotter line re-fitted snug and yare, and as I prepared to shove off again, I remembered that the neighborhood of cottages on the east side of the river was called Tahanto, where my parents had rented a cottage one year. The phrase, "All A-taunto in Tahanto" came into my mind and stayed there as I set up to row again.

By this time it was too late to resume my heading for Mattapoisett, as it would be dark by the time I arrived, so I decided to spend the night in the snug anchorage in the lee of Tobey's Island. Out beyond the jetties, I pulled in the mainsheet and caught the heavy air and was pleased to see that the snotter block held. The sails snagged the breeze and the Micro galloped downwind with the whitecaps. It was about 1700 when I picked my way through a few boulders and dropped the hook. I chose my grandfather's little 10lb navy anchor for ease of retrieval. The 30lb fisherman would be overkill and harder to pull up.

With rocks downwind, I wanted ground tackle that was both secure and quick to hoist and stow. If the wind didn't let up in the morning, I'd need to raise anchor and get sailing quickly to avoid getting blown onto the rocks. The anchor line played out to its end, then the hook stuck and the line tightened. The Micro began a steady sweeping back and forth across the face of the wind, driven by the breeze. The back-and-forth roaming lasted till I shoved off the next morning. Our arc was clear of any rocks or

shore hazards that would be exposed by the ebbing tide.

There were a few motorboats pulling water skiers around the chop-free waters in the lee of Tobey's. Their wakes rocked my little cruiser, but they weren't very disturbing as ou boat was already in motion riding at anchor. In some anchorages, motorboats cause me some worry. My sleep if not my life would soon be extinguished by a nocturnal strike by an outboard-powered missile. But here behind Tobey's, there were very few moorings and the rocks exposed in most tides would provide a visible barrier to other boats. Even if their drivers didn't see the boulders, the most revved-up cigarette boat would be halted by the physical barrier of 30-ton granite boulders.

Secure Anchorage

The hook was holding well, so I washed up and broke out a supper of cold cooked chicken, vegetables and rice washed down by a half bottle of white wine. If not for the 15-20 knot breeze, the warm and hazy air would have been ideal for mosquitoes and the cursed no-see-um midges, which though tiny have a stinging bite and lingering itch. The insects are shore-bound unless they have relatively calm air. Since my CO2-producing respiration was carried offshore, the critters didn't get a chance to home in on me.

Two ospreys air-surfed on the updraft produced by the wall of stunted pines along the windward shore of the island. From time to time, they called to each other with a high, squeaky, extended chirp. I didn't see them have any fishing success. A little raft of large black ducks placidly paddled and dabbled among the exposed rocks. They showed no fear of neither the ospreys nor me. A few seagulls and terns made their evening sweep around the harbor before roosting for the night.

The last of the motorboats left the cove dragging a girl on a tube, screaming with ecstasy as her father opened up the throttle and her brother watched. The moon, nearly full, was just becoming visible above the haze on the horizon. I wished Frann were with me to share the growing quiet and the rising of the moon. I pulled out my phone from its dry quarters in the hammock belowdecks and called her to check in, doing my best to convey the beauty of the scene. Shore concerns had kept her off this cruise; we resolved that next summer, we'd do it together.

As I was finishing up the call, I got a mosquito bite. Either the wind had abated just enough for the mosquitoes to catch my scent from the shore or, more likely, they were from the leeward shore 300 yards downwind and they had finally flown all the way across the cove to have a drink of my mammal blood. Either way, it was time to go below for the night.

Once the hatch covers are snug, the cabin of the Micro is bug-proof. There are no screens, but the insects don't fly up the stern vent. The genius of Bolger's design provides ample ventilation at anchor. With the bow pointing to windward, the forward vent draws fresh air in, it flows astern through the cabin, and shoots out the stern. I have had the immense satisfaction of peeking out at night and seeing a swarm of frustrated mosquitoes buzzing around 10' downwind but not going in to bother me.

I pulled out the Grisham novel I had swinging in the monkey hammock and read by the abundant light of the long flashlight perched on my shoulder just so. Though the air was hot and muggy, it was moving well enough. When I put my hand up to the forward vent just above my head, I felt a gratifyingly cool stream of fresh air moving through. The wind was gusting up a little now, but the anchor was still holding. The same land lights winked at me, in the same orientation, at either end of the Micro's roamings across the face of the wind. The waves were mere ripples here, 20 yards offshore, but beyond the sandbar at the southern tip of the island, there was a decent chop that would have made for a noisy cabin. At this anchorage, the noisiest aspect was the rhythmic drumming of the halyard against the mainmast. The ripples were still audible too, but pleasantly so.

Night Music, Part 1

After my reading, I doused the light and peeked out the portside light. The oval framed a gorgeous haze-oranged full moon just pulling above the horizon cloudbank. I slept fitfully as I always do the first night of a cruise, listening to the halyard's drumming and the waves' lapping. Pop music songs, not particularly to my liking, ran through my head to the rhythms of the halyard's drumming against the mast as I tossed and turned. It was as if I were at a marina and there were a party on the boat in the next slip. One of the recurrent tunes in my head was "They're Coming to Take Me Way," with its introductory drum solo. Whenever I woke up enough to remember where I was, I raised myself up to one elbow and checked our position against the shore lights. It was reassuring to know that the anchor was holding, and that I wouldn't have to leave my berth and venture into that wild wind to re-secure the ground tackle.

The tide in the morning would not be favorable until after 0900, so there was no advantage to an early rising. I did my best not to peek at my watch, resolving not to rouse until broad daylight. With worries about the snugness of the boat's holding, though, and the knowledge that there were big boulders just downwind, I could not let myself go into a deep sleep. I remembered reading that a good captain never sleeps too deeply and is always subconsciously mulling over the hazards and opportunities of every moment. I also read in *MAIB* in an article by Carl Adler that when cruising, Carl and his wife never let themselves turn in before 2130. It's often tempting after a hard day's sail, especially when conditions topsides aren't pleasant, but likely to result in a dark awakening with hours of enforced idleness.

Somehow I managed to keep my eyes closed until the first light of morning. After breakfast, I had an hour or so before the tide would be favorable, so I washed the decks and re-checked the snotter block repair. When I am sailing into a new harbor, especially one as steeped in nautical lore as Mattapoisett, I try to make my humble craft as ship-shape as possible. All dirt was scrubbed off, the docking bumpers were pulled inside the gunwales, and no lines were dangling.

The wind was still gusting to at least 20 knots, so I decided to reef the main. The southwester would likely blow harder as the day went on. I carefully planned my departure through the half-tide rocks, resolving to catch a starboard tack soon enough to gain forward progress before drifting into a just-submerged boulder. I managed to pull up, rinse, and stow the ground tackle in the cockpit, then sheet in the main to head off on a beam reach parallel to the shore before drifting into the rocks. Kids across the cove were rigging up a few small sailboats belonging to a summer camp. Lessons started at 0900, apparently.

As I reached out of the cove, one of the boys called out that he liked my boat. I thanked him and sailed on, glad that I had secured any dangling lines or other signs of sloppiness. I glanced at the ground tackle, lying in a wet heap, and tossed a buoyancy cushion onto it to hide its untidiness in case anyone got close enough to see. When cruising alone, I like to have the anchor within arm's reach in case of an unexpected need to drop the hook. With the anchor line kept threaded through the bow chock, the anchor once secure will point us right into the wind in short order without my having to leave the helm.

I pointed around the sandbar at the south end of Tobey's. The snotter block repair was holding fine in the lee side of the island. But it would also have to hold in the choppier exposed waters of the Bay. If the screws pulled out again, the trip would be over and I'd have to head back to the White House. Mattapoisett would have to remain a "Special" mystery. So I pointed past Tahanto and its jetties with all lines taut; all gear stowed; crew well-fed and rested. A-taunto in Tahanto, a bientôt!

The Breeze Freshens

The haze had not cleared, and the breeze still blasted up to at least 25 knots. The chop didn't get significant until beyond Wings Neck, though, so I made reasonably good progress despite heading upwind. At the north end of the Buzzards Bay entrance to the Canal, there was a 1,000' jetty called the Sand Spit. I had to go southwest of this to get to the western shore of the Bay. At the tip of the dike was a tall orange pylon to show the canal entrance to pilots about to enter the canal. This was usually easy to see once even with the tip of Wings Neck. Today, though, the haze obscured the jetty and while I could see the darkened form of the jetty, I couldn't make out the pylon.

The further I sailed, the choppier it got. I also got closer to the Canal channel, where the tide was just beginning to flow out. I had picked this phase of the tide to make the passage because sailing contrary to both the current and the wind, I could not make more than half a knot of progress. With full tidal flow in my favor, I could make a couple of knots of progress over ground, but with the current flowing against the 20 to 25-knot breeze, it would steepen and make more abrupt the chop. I had seen standing 3' waves 10' apart in the Canal in such conditions.

The Micro with its high freeboard could navigate this, but Bolger makes clear that all hatches are to be closed snugly when sailing in such conditions. I preferred to keep the cockpit hatch open even in choppy weather so that I could rest my feet in the hull and sit upright. The alternative, which I have practiced only when sailing in the rain, is to close the hatch and sit on it with legs straight out and back against the windward gunwale.

Today I compromised and kept both the cockpit hatch and the companionway hatch open, though I slid the forward hatch fully aft to keep out the abundant spray. Having the companionway open enables me to make quicker trips to the head. When the urge strikes, I can luff the main with the mizzen sheeted in tight and go below to do my busi-

ness, knowing the boat will more or less face the wind and waves. I still like to minimize the time the helm is unattended, so I violate the Master's dictum and keep the companionway open. I hope I don't regret it someday.

Eventually I made it past the jetty and sailed west, enjoying a somewhat calmer sea. Approaching the western shore of the Bay reduced the breeze's fetch and therefore the chop. The shore details sharpened as I got nearer, revealing the gigantic homes along the points on Sippican Neck. On an earlier trip to these parts, I'd seen a helicopter land on one of the huge lawns. Cruising along the shore, I ate my lunch, wondering who lived in the 10,000 square foot structures I was passing. On one house I counted over 40 windows visible from the water.

My little cat yawl rig must have looked strange from land, so small among the whitecaps in the haze. I got a kick out of the thought that I, a man of limited means, was savoring the special charms of these waters while the wealthy ashore were watching television and drinking coffee, which they could have done in a Boston basement. Or perhaps they were gazing wistfully out their many windows at the sailboat, wishing they were thumping the waves with me. More likely, if they were looking out at all, they were wondering about the peculiar rig and hoping I wouldn't wreck it on their beach.

Bird Island Refuge

Soon, I passed Sippican Neck, and Bird Island emerged from the haze upwind. Thousands of terns chattered and wheeled 10' above the spartina grass-covered dunes of the little island. A squat old lighthouse sits on the seaward end of it. The island is maintained by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. The island is preserved so that the common and Arctic terns will have a safe place to breed. The common terns can fly as far as Argentina to spend the winter. It's amazing to think that a 4oz bird can fly and fish its way across 20,000 miles of the Atlantic to get to this one small island to breed.

The DFW several times a season comes to the island to trap and eradicate any rodent predators, herring gulls, or human disturbances. There is a little yellow raft a few hundred yards to the lee of Bird Island with weather and other instruments, I suppose to monitor conditions for the terns. DFW has a website with excellent information about the tern population here and the handful of other islands where they breed, including a Bird Island webcam where bird lovers can watch the antics of the sleek-winged world travelers in early summer, here. http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/conservation/birds/tern_restoration.htm.

As I passed between the island and Sippican Neck, I caught a whiff of the ammonia-rich scent of guano. It made me realize that guano-gatherers of old would not only get swooped and pooped upon, but have their noses and lungs seared by the close-up burning smell of bird turds.

I knew from previous sails to Marion that Converse Point, the next neck to the south, was about 1.5 nautical miles across Sippican Harbor. It seemed a bit irresponsible to sail off into the fog completely out of sight of shore. But I knew the southwesterly, once locked in, would only get stronger and steadier as the day went on, so the wind would be my compass. Once I could no longer see Bird or Sippican Neck, all directions looked the same. There was no glint and shadow of sunshine or even cloudy daylight on the wave crests and troughs. I could see how in a calm it would be impossible to navigate without a compass. I had one down below in my pack, but I didn't take it out.

Pretty soon, I began to make out moored boats, trees and beaches on the far shore. I kept on pointing, knocking through the land-blunted chop. I had my trusty NOAA Buzzards Bay Chart #13229 open to the right panel, held in place by a few links of my anchor chain in a sheltered pocket of the cockpit where it wouldn't get too drenched with spray. From previous experience, I was able to pick out shore landmarks and connect them with their charted locations. I labored my way upwind past Converse, noting my slow progress against moored boats, some of which I tried but failed to pass several times. The Micro isn't the best pointer.

The Sunfish Capsizes

After pointing all the way nearly to Peases Point, I saw a couple of teen-aged boys launching a Sunfish off the beach. They didn't have PFDs, but otherwise they looked like they knew what they were doing. I waved a quick greeting as we roared past each other on opposite tacks. The boys were reaching back and forth among the moored boats on a blunter tack than mine, but since my progress into the wind was slow, they were in sight for quite a while despite the fog. On one of my come-abouts, I took a quick glance back to look for them. They had capsized and were struggling to get the boat upright again. Several tries saw their wet sail flapping wildly, the boys scrambling to pull themselves up and seize control. Then the right (or wrong) combination of misplaced ballast, snagged sheets and broaching waves would send them down again.

I thought through my options for helping them if necessary: unfortunately my boat lacked the pointing power necessary to tow them mostly into the wind to get back to the beach. I could toss them PFDs and help them up the boarding ladder out of the water but the situation was not yet that dire. They looked all right and seemed more amused than threatened by their predicament. It was a good thing they were capable, though, because the wind was blowing them further and further offshore, out of sight of land if not all moored boats. Eventually they got upright and then beam reached directly for shore, to my relief.

Angelica Point

From studying the chart and wind, I could see that the hardest part of the sail would be getting around the rocky shores of Angelica Point. It was marked with the same kind of heavy red triangle as the end of the Sand Spit with its tall orange pylon. Surrounding the island was a thick constellation of rocks. The chart didn't show any right off the Point, but I didn't want to take any chances on striking one on a foggy day in a stiff breeze. Several hundred yards offshore was a nun buoy marking the channel. I knew there would not be rocks on the port side of Nun "2", so I resolved to sail around the weather side of it, despite the lack of shelter.

Though the Angelica Point shore was bristling with rocks, it was also located in busy sailing waters. One of the local yacht clubs had placed big 2' orange ball-shaped buoys as racing marks at various locations, some quite near the shore. I couldn't imagine any club would set out or maintain a buoy anywhere near rocks. So I decided it would be safe to sail near them. I didn't go aground or get wrecked on any rocks, so I guess my theory was correct!

Soon, I began to make out a tower marked with a red or orange triangle. This must have been the shore mark indicated by the red triangle on the chart at Angelica Point. I later learned that the tower is called "The Spindle" by the locals. Sailing in these testy conditions, the names took on sinister connotations in my mind. "The Spindle" seemed like it could be a fitting accessory to the Angel of Death, thrusting into hulls of doomed seagoing vessels. Given Mattapoisett's history of ship building and maritime commerce, many vessels over the years must have foundered on the Point. I resolved not to be one of them as I headed further offshore for Nun "2" upwind, out to the marked channel.

Passing the Point, I lost its shelter, and faced bigger waves. The wind had a fetch of over 10 miles here, so more water got built up in each wave. The chop was a little blunter though, and I plowed on, the Micro's reefed canvas providing plenty of power in the gale.

A Cat Looms Out of the Fog

About halfway out to the nun, I was startled by the sound of a particularly loud wave. Looming out of the fog were the twin hulls of a big catamaran, running towards me at five knots or so. I had plenty of momentum to get out of their way, but I was surprised. By the looks on the faces of the people on deck, I surprised them too. Their smiles faded when they saw an unexpected boat near their course, but returned when I waved. I briefly considered tooting on my EZ Blow horn repeatedly to warn any other boaters, but reckoned that there weren't many out, and I could see far enough to get out of the way of all but the fastest powerboats in time. A fast motorboat would also make enough noise to warn me in advance. Besides, I needed both hands to sail in the bluster and chop.

Eventually, I thought I could make out the nun through the fog. I kept sailing towards where I thought it was, and eventually it emerged. The fog seemed to be dissipating a little. Out near the nun, the bigger waves in the unsheltered water alternately raised the buoy high on the crests and hid it in the troughs. Soon after sighting the nun, I reached and rounded it and altered course back towards the Spindle, this time on the channel side of the mark, without fear of hitting unknown shore hazards.

The new course enabled me to ease the sheets out to a beam reach. I was making a little better progress now, and the oblique angle to the waves made for a quieter ride. The fog was lifting by the minute, and the south side of Angelica Point spread to leeward. To windward I saw Mattapoisett Neck emerging from the haze. I started to see a few large sailboats, well-crewed, in the harbor. They seemed to be gathering for a regatta. One of them came up to pass me from upwind, going at least 7 knots in the still-fresh breeze. The crew aboard gave me a friendly wave, which I returned. Further west a mile or so, the Ned Point Lighthouse became visible.

Ned Point Spectators

Though no longer (if ever) maintained as an aid to navigators, the lighthouse has convenient parking and an excellent view of

Mattapoisett Outer Harbor. Many cars were in the lot, and spectators with cameras lined the shore. They were probably there to watch the regatta. A powerboat with large, open deck was anchored near a buoy not far from Ned Point. It must have been the Race Committee Boat marking the starting line. All the sailboats were converging there, including a half dozen Herreshoff 12½s, for what had to be a staggered start. I tried to stay out of the middle of the fleet so as not to interfere with any boat's racing progress. On the beam reach, it didn't take long for me to get to the Inner Harbor.

One of the "special' things about Mattapoisett is that it was the home of Edey & Duff, alas now defunct. For decades, this storied yard built such classic messing-about boats as Bolger's Dovekie and Shearwater, Bill Harding's Doughdish (a fiberglass update of Nathaniel Herreshoff's 12½), and larger classics such as Stone Horse and Sakonnet 23. We passed at least one boatyard with marine railway and at least one yacht club with burgees and flags flying in the southwester. The fog had lifted, but the breeze hadn't and the Micro's brisk beam reach brought her into the harbor with a bone in her teeth. To the west tall clouds were building, threatening thunderstorms or at least early darkness. Without a known berth at which to tie up for the night, I wanted to get settled quickly and anchor or dock up in daylight.

The navigation was getting trickier. I was dodging a thicket of moored sailboats and peeping downwind in search of the Town Landing, so I didn't have much opportunity for rubber-necking. I also didn't want to make any sailing miscues like colliding with any boats, buoys or boulders in this storied harbor. As I identified and approached the enormous town docks and landing, my need to attend to seamanship was confirmed by the sight of dozens of people fishing, loading or unloading vessels, and watching the harbor. I sailed to the leeward-most pier, docked, dropped sail, and pulled in my boomkin to tie up fore and aft at the tightest open space of dock I could find. I successfully ran the gauntlet of gazers without raising any more quizzical stares at the stubby Bolger cat yawl than normal.

Threading through the Pilings

When I went ashore with my PFD off, I went straight to the Harbormaster's Office at the foot of the dock. The Assistant Harbormaster told me there were free moorings available, but that I could also tie up at the pilings of the windward pier, where I would be sheltered by all but the southeast breezes, which would sweep bay-bred swells all the way into the harbor and slam us against the creosote-coated timbers. With a steady southwesterly, the odds were good for a night of predictable and diminishing winds, which we would face head on at the outermost pier.

So I shoved off and raised sail again to head upwind. Fortunately I made the landing all right, scooting a few boat lengths upwind of a small impoundment formed by a few pilings. I worried that if the wind were wrong in the morning, the pilings would present little margin for error at launching time. Without a motor, and with long, awkward sweeps, I would make quite a spectacle of myself if I didn't catch the wind and make headway on my first try. But that worry was for tomorrow. Today I had beaten up the bay on repaired rigging through a pretty thick fog and made it to my chosen destination dry and on time, and I had earned my night's rest.

After lashing up the bow and stern lines and dock bumpers, I put my wallet and phone back in my pocket and climbed the nearest dockladder to get some supper. The Assistant Harbormaster was not busy, walking at a leisurely pace towards the office, so I accosted him to ask about rocks off Angelica Point. He said that directly off the point, there were no rocks, and that there was at least 10' of water off The Spindle at all tides all the way to Nun #2. I felt that I had been a little over-cautious, having extended my sail out into the haze and nearly into the path of that big catamaran, but I was proceeding based on my best information at the time. For the rest of my seafaring life, I will know that I can simply clear The Spindle and head in for Mattapoisett without strict need to follow the channel.

Night Music, Part 2

The Mattapoisett Town Landing is truly at the center of the town. Proceeding inland from the docks I came to Shipyard Park, a large green with mature plantings, which spreads up the hill, surrounded by Federalist buildings large and small. A well-appointed gazebo sits in the middle of the park. Tonight was Band Night, and quite a number of senior citizens with folding chairs and blankets were setting up seating around the stage. Musicians toting horn cases were ambling up from the parking lot at the head of the docks, and it became apparent that preparations for a concert were under way.

I felt lucky to have arrived in Mattapoissett that night. People of all ages were turning out for the concert. Families of young children were picnicking near open grass to allow them space to run around; teens were cruising in crowds near the periphery. Out in the parking area, a food and ice cream truck attracted a line of the hungry. Though I had sandwich makings in the boat's cooler, I wanted to get a taste of local cuisine and so joined the line. I ordered a stuffed quahog and a chicken salad sandwich. The quahog was frozen, so the driver/chef had to thaw it in the little microwave. I stood beside the window while the driver served at least three ice cream customers. I didn't mind the wait in such a picturesque setting.

When I sat down to eat, there were still lots of empty park benches, which were oriented towards the water and not the evening's entertainment. At the end of the town dock, there was a large wooden weathervane in the shape of a swordfish. Many successful fishing and whaling trips had left from this harbor. According to the sign on the town green, the Holmes Shipyard used to be right here. Mattapoissett Harbor saw the launching of dozens of whaling ships, including the *Acushnet*, on which Herman Mellville learned the whaling trade prior to writing *Moby Dick*. The combination of forests, waterpower for sawmills, a good harbor, and abundant capital from the nearby New Bedford fisheries made Mattapoisett a good ship and boat building site for over a hundred and fifty years.

After my seaside supper, I decided to go back onboard. There were lots of people walking up and down the docks, and I wanted to attend to the boat. There would be plenty more time in the morning to explore inland.

A Night on the Wharf

The dock to which I was lashed was asphalt paved, so that vehicles could ferry people and gear to and from the boats. The evening state of tide was low, at least 10' below the pavement. I wondered whether it would be possible for a drunken driver to drive off the wharf onto the Micro. Looking carefully, I saw that the pilings projected about 3' above the asphalt. I decided that a high-axled truck might be able to do it but not a passenger car. It gave me some comfort to realize this, but it didn't stop my "worst case scenario" imagination from envisioning being asleep when a multi-ton vehicle crashed down on my little craft. I probably would stand no chance of survival without a PFD on.

But the infinitesimally small odds of a land vehicle collision from above did not outweigh my desire for a cool, comfortable night's sleep. So I turned in, PFD-free, to the strains of the band's merry Broadway and patriotic tunes. I awoke a couple of times to the sound of teenagers shouting goofily, but otherwise spent a safe and quiet night dockside.

When I awoke, I was debating whether the landing and park were empty, enabling me to stand up to get dressed, or populated, in which case I'd have to put my trousers on belowdecks in a sitting position. "Hey Rich, come look at this boat," a female voice called out from above. That settled my dressing posture. With spectators nearby, I got dressed promptly in the cabin, hoping to make myself presentable and chat with some boat-savvy residents.Once properly clothed, I popped open the hatch and peeked out.

Mattapoisett Morning

Ruth and Richard Bates had been out for a morning bicycle ride, taking their daily route down to what they called the "finger dock" where I had spent the night. They were intrigued with the Micro, and we struck up a conversation. They proudly pointed out their catboat, the *Scintilla*, an 18' Herreshoff-designed America Catboat. Ruth and Richard also identified some of the other wooden sailing yachts, including the *Cape Girl*, a 30' Cape Cod catboat owned by Cal Perkins. He has since traded it for a Marshall 18. We exchanged addresses and they invited me to come sailing with them the next time I was in town. I doubted whether the plodding Micro could keep up with a catboat with a giant mainsail, but I intend to take them up on their invitation someday soon. Before they pedaled off, I asked them where I could find a good bakery or café. Ruth directed me to a shop on Route 6A about half a mile inland. We promised to stay in touch and they left me to swab the deck and tidy up.

The old town of Mattapoisett is like a museum of mostly small Federalist brick and wooden houses all built in the early-to-mid 19th century. Historical placques abounded, detailing the shipbuilding and seagoing prowess of the early settlers. The Kinsale Inn offered a promising menu and dining venue within sight of the Town Landing. Frann and I sailed over for a tasty scallop lunch there on another trip. As we dined, I was comforted by being able to glance over to see the tip of my mainmast, indicating that the Micro was still secured to the wharf.

The town looked gorgeous under the calm, clear blue sky. The previous evening's threatening thunderhead had never delivered a storm and the air was pleasantly quiet. I strolled past quite a large elementary school, belying a much bigger population than could occupy the small historic district. The current

commercial life of the town was out on car-friendly Route 6A, with several prosperous-looking auto repair and home maintenance trade shops. I found the café with a generous spread of muffins, bagels, croissants; local and regional newspapers; and most important, an accessible outlet for charging my smartphone. It hadn't been charged for two days.

Reading the local news, eavesdropping on a growing circle of women talking about gardens and dropping real estate values, surfing Wikipedia about local geography now that my phone was getting charged again, I honed my awareness and appreciation for the "South Coast" region southwest of Cape Cod, not to be confused with the "South Shore" north of the Cape. I lingered and snacked until the battery charge climbed past 80%, then returned to the waterfront.

The morning, though well-brightened, had begun to cloud over. There was no noticeable breeze, and my intent gazes at the leaves in the treetops could detect only an occasional mere quiver. The wind had spent itself blowing off the previous days' haze. If there were enough wind, the tide timing might be right for a Woods Hole passage, at least as far as Woods Hole Harbor. But there was no morning breeze yet.

A Clean Launch

I rigged up quickly and planned my departure. There was only about 30' of leeway before some wharf pilings would snag my spars. There were a few people casting fishing lines off the dock who would be there to see if I spoiled my departure, so I loosened the lines holding my oars on deck and got my thole pins handy in case I missed catching a starboard tack. After untying docking lines aft and fore, then pulling the bumpers aboard, I shoved off the bow and snugged in the sheets, keeping an eye on the mizzen sheet way back at the boomkin outhaul. In past departures from docks, this line had snagged before, and if cleated it would halt all progress as the boat swivels in place downwind, the main catching a bigger and bigger share of the wind and risking a capsize.

Though there was only a little wind, it was enough to get us underway, ghosting past the glorious Cape Cod Catboat the Bateses had raved about. The boat lived up to all their hyperbole, as did many of her sisters in that sweet anchorage. The startling splash of a school of snapper bluefish punctuated my slow, foam-free passage out into the bay. I dug my fishing line out and trolled for a while, but either the lure was moving too slowly to look like a terrified baitfish in flight or I wasn't close enough to the school to be noticed. So I reeled it in and sailed, hoping for more of a breeze once offshore. I passed the Spindle quite close, and through the glassy surface I could see only green depths with no rocks.

I did catch a bit more of a breeze for a while, out to the middle of the Bay. I could clearly see New Bedford to the southwest, and the entire chain of the Elizabeth Islands to the south. To the southeast, Woods Hole yawned, like the drain at the bottom of a bathtub. I hoped for more wind to counter the current because otherwise, once we got close enough, the ebbing tide would suck the Micro through there like a pine needle into a storm sewer. The chart claims the tide runs at 4 knots through Woods Hole, but I've been through there on a power boat when the channel buoys were churning up foam wakes half as tall as the nuns and cans. So unless wind and tide were just so, I would stay far away.

West Falmouth Harbor was my back-up destination, where I could tie up for a few minutes and walk over for a newspaper and coffee at the general store. So I steered for the new wind turbines just south of West Falmouth and hoped for wind. I thought I saw the turbines spinning slowly, but couldn't be sure at this distance. The wind turbines there and at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy at the head of Buzzards Bay have become giant tell-tales for sailors. We can see from a distance of several miles how fast the wind is blowing and from what direction.

Becalmed

Almost no wind blew once I was out in the middle of the bay, though. I studied our wake for signs of movement and I saw only tiny whorls indicating little progress. The mainsail was slack and rippled, but staying put in its "leeward" orientation. In the wake were little swimming plankton, a fresh hatching of crab larvae. I dipped my mesh net in the Bay water to scoop some up and put them into my trusty 5 gallon bucket about half full of fresh-scooped seawater. The crab fry were vigorous little scooters, navigating to all levels in herky-jerky but effective movements. My little nieces would get a kick out of seeing the larvae, so I stowed the loaded bucket in the stern well in hopes that they would stay alive by the time we got back to the White House.

I speculated as to what kinds of other marine life would be feasting on them now. The chart said there was over 30' of depth in these waters, plenty of room for big fish, even for a whale. In fact, a pilot whale had swum up the Weweantic River in nearby Wareham a few years prior. In 2004, a 17' great white shark had lingered long enough to get tagged by Woods Hole marine biologists in a tidal pond on the Elizabeths. The last fatal shark attack in Massachusetts occurred in 1936 right where I was, off Mattapoisett. I tried to picture the Micro from a shark's eye perspective 30' below the surface. The boat suddenly seemed too small for leisurely lolling in these deep waters; time to move, I decided.

So I pulled out the thole pins and rowed, sails still up. The oars raised some ripples and we zoomed up to a full knot of progress. I love to row, but it's not as satisfying when there are no landmarks against which to measure progress. I worked up a sweat quickly in the humid weather. I got into a good rhythm, and enjoyed hearing the little bow-wave ripplings powered by my oars, pulled by my muscles, which in turn were fueled by the Mattapoisett-baked bagel and croissant I'd eaten.

After an hour or so, the wind picked up a bit, with cats paws riffling the surface here and there. So I stowed the oars and thole pins and hauled in the main sheet. The West Falmouth wind turbines were a tad closer than before, but Angelica Point was still clearly visible. The cats paws filled in more and more until there was a spread of wavelets all across the bay and the Micro made merry singing progress. The bubbles and rings of a wind-driven hull slicing through the ocean after being becalmed are some of the sweetest sailing sounds I know.

Bluefish Strike

After another hour, I saw and heard the familiar bell buoy outside West Falmouth Harbor. Then I heard something else: sudden splashes out of synchrony with waves. Bluefish! They were chasing baitfish heading into the harbor to feast on the fresh pickings left on the beaches. The little fish leapt in shimmering waves as the snapper blues pursued them into the air. There was plenty of breeze to keep up trolling speed now. I dropped my lure, luffed the main a little and unreeled several boat lengths of fishing line. Just past the nun bell, I got a decisive strike. I dropped the tiller and started reeling. It was no monster on the line, but it still put up a decent fight, especially when it got close to the boat. The white and blue-green body of a young but vigorous blue, water-refracted to a much larger size than reality, came within reach of my round mesh net.

I dipped with one hand, while pulling up my rod with the other to maneuver the catch to the net. The net's mouth was less than a foot wide, and the fish's thrashing made it hard to get past the swishy tail. Being close to the hull gave the blue so much of a scare that it yanked itself right off the hook, gliding away after the release lunge, probably in shock, then swimming briskly down and astern into the depths to rejoin the school. I was disappointed to lose the fish, but it was only about a pound, too small to keep. I hoped it would recover quickly from the trauma of the hooking and fighting.

My father, a devoted bluefish-chaser, assured me that the throw-backs recover. A veterinarian friend of mine said that carnivores are much more robust than herbivores, among mammals anyway. A barbed-wire scratch will kill a sheep but 10 similar wounds won't bother a dog. So I was cheered to see the fish swim away quickly once the shock of having made its escape wore off. According to James Rose, professor emeritus of zoology at the University of Wyoming, writing in the *New York Times,* 10 August 2010, "with proper handling, even released fish caught with bait, not just flies with barbless hooks, survive at a rate typically above 90%," as long as the fish isn't played out when reeled in.

Stop at a Safe Harbor

The channel to West Falmouth Harbor is serpentine and wends past jetties and sandbars. Some large and interesting houses come down close to the dunes, with boats moored off of porches and walkways, implying the owners enjoyed beaching and boating. The West Falmouth area continues the sandy shore theme begun at Old Silver Beach just to the north, with far fewer rocks than in upper Buzzards Bay. The long peninsula of Chappaquoit Beach which protects the west side of the Harbor is a favorite of sailboarders and kite sailors. There can be a tricky tide coming through the narrow channel, and sand bars abound. The close shore makes for fluky wind, so I've had to row in here several times.

Today I made it all the way to the dock by Aeolis's grace. I tied up at the shallow end of the dock and took the pleasant walk to the West Falmouth General Store, past the Shining Sea Bike Path. The Hurricane of 1938 struck this village hard, with hundreds of homes destroyed. My mother's family had rented a cottage near the harbor in the summer of 1938, which was ruined in the storm that September.

After getting coffee and the paper, I scooted back out the channel, fighting a losing battle with the incoming tide. The fluky winds in the shelter of the high sandbar didn't enable much progress. A big catboat with a

much larger sail than mine was able to pass me and get out to the sweet winds past the jetty. I ended up needing to row 100 yards or so out into the unobstructed breeze. I passed a big idling inboard-outboard with a dozen women casting for the snapper blues that were still feasting at the entrance to the harbor. I learned later that it was a "girls learn to fish" charter which runs out of the harbor regularly.

Soon, I tapped into the strengthened southwesterly, and rode the incoming tide north towards the Canal and home waters. It was amazing how quickly I got to the big nun off Scraggy Neck, and the lighthouse off Wings Neck. I felt like a goose that flew up to the jet stream to ride over the Himlayas, or a turtle that swam into the East Australian Current. I was riding the favorable flow from two fluids: the southwest wind funneled through the narrowing shores of Buzzards Bay, and the tide channeled through the deep waters of the Canal. In less than 2 hours, I'd sailed the 8 nautical miles from West Falmouth to Phinney's Harbor. The Micro couldn't have done it without the tide.

Back at the White House, the usual Friday evening reunion was convening. Almost the entire family had come up from New York, New Hampshire, and greater Boston. Frann gave me a big hug and news from home. I brought my bucket full of crab fry to the porch to show the young cousins. The feisty little rowers delighted them. The sailors on the porch heard my tale of rounding the Spindle in the fog. My mother filled me in on the remainder of her visit with her friends. All the while the southwest breeze addled the mosquitoes and prevented them from landing. We lingered sipping wine from sweaty glasses and dining until the kids' bedtime, when Jupiter and the first stars came out.

It's good to venture out on a cruise and good to come back safely to shore, even from someplace as special as Mattapoisett.

Micro 2x2 at Mattapoisett Town Landing.

Sunrise at Mattapoisett Finger Dock.

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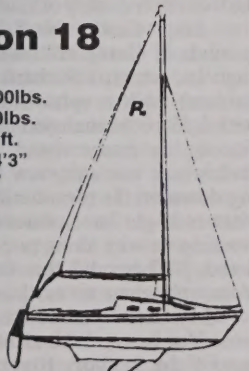

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A classic drumlin as seen from a high tide.

Riverine Dream

Part 2

By Randall Brubaker
Somerville, Massachusetts

Having enjoyed the bucolic beauty of the Sudbury River in my 8' rowboat (*MAIB*, May) I was eager to try my oars on the lower Ipswich River, below the last dam where it flowed into the ocean at the junction of Plum Island Sound and Ipswich Bay. An adventurous family planted the seed for this outing when I heard of their earliest canoe trip paddling down the Ipswich and landing on Crane's Beach. How hard could it be if they could do it with two young children in a tippy canoe? Just play the tides and go on a weekday to avoid the weekend joyriding hordes of powerboaters churning up wakes.

Yet I got a shivery thrill thinking about rowing out in my dinghy. Would this end up being a foolhardy search for trouble or a high state of messing about in boats? I figured I should know something about salt water from my sailing days; though rowing in a busy estuary would be a new challenge. I sailed Plum Island Sound once many years ago when I sailed my little trimaran to Gloucester and overnighted on the Annasquam River. The next morning, I sailed across Ipswich Bay and then motored up the Sound to the Parker River.

"How did that go for you, skipper?"

I recall nasty currents and complicated navigation trying to follow the serpentine channel. And being boarded by vicious greenhead flies as thirsty for blood as any pirate. Sure I would rather pedal my bike on a rail trail? Not with the delights of boating in September, well past greenhead season, and my revival of being back on the water. I felt a rising urgency to avail myself of fleeting summer days, however modest my boat.

Earlier in the summer, a friend and I had patronized the Foote Brothers Canoe Rentals on the upper Ipswich River. Afterwards, we drove into the town of Ipswich to research public boat ramps below the last dam. We found that the historic Ipswich Town Wharf offered a ramp for a small fee. We also turned up a free public parking lot at Great Neck where car-topped boats could be launched from Pavilion Beach directly into Plum Island Sound. It looked excellent, except for a long hike across a clam flat at low tide. These two spots were at either end of the tidal section of the river, allowing me to choose one whenever I arrived so I could play the tides favorably.

I was stoked! I now had a plan, however loose: launch to catch the tide fair, explore the Ipswich River and tidal creeks, jump over to the backside of Plum Island, and burning with enthusiasm, I imagined I might even crank it over to Crane Beach, too, before calling it a day. I juggled my schedule to free a weekday with a fair weather forecast. On a day when I could escape the office, it should be nearly windless with clear skies to row the dinghy in such exposed waters, if it please the capricious gods of fate.

I pulled it together in early September, arriving in Ipswich about 1pm. With a peak high tide, I decided to launch into Plum Island Sound from Great Neck and row around the corner to enter the river with slack high water. I planned to go upriver until the tide was too strong against me, then turn and run back out. Once back in the Sound, I'd put the hammer down and somehow cross the out-flowing current to land on the western shore of Plum Island. After beach-combing and sunset pictures, I'd row back and haul the dinghy and gear across the clam flat at dead low water to load up in fading light.

"I love it when a plan comes together!"

As I rowed away from shore, the view from the weather deck was of a sparkling clear sunny day in one of New England's most beautiful maritime crossroads; two estuaries, the Parker and Ipswich merge to exit into the bonny blue sea. They contain a vast network of large and small tidal creeks meandering through thousands of acres of salt marsh. Across the sound was Plum Island, a beach lover's paradise. Forming the southern boundary was beautiful Castle Neck, a glacial drumlin with its grounds protected by the Trustees of Reservations, edged with the pristine sand of Crane's Beach.

I was floating in historic territory the Indians called the Agawam. In 1912, naturalist Charles Townsend wrote, "It was indeed a favored region, a happy hunting ground, and the Indians lived here in comparative peace and plenty. On the drumlins and in the dunes are many evidences of the departed race, ancient shell heaps of clams and oysters, for oysters formerly throve here, and, intermingled with them, bones of the great auk, of ducks and waders and turkeys, of deer and bears and seals."

This place caught the eye of the white man in turn. In 1614, Captain John Smith described the area: "Here are many rising hills; and on their tops and descents are many cornfields and delightful groves. On the east is an isle of two or three leagues in length fit for pasture or salt ponds, with many fair high groves of mulberry trees, oaks, pines, walnuts and other wood, to make this place an excellent habitation."

The Puritans quickly pounced when John Winthrop Jr. colonized the area in 1633. Over the following centuries, shipwrights launched many a fine vessel down the estuaries of Massachusetts' North Shore, vessels that traded in commerce locally and around the world.

This historical richness deepened my pleasure as I hauled on the oars in my salty little rowboat. With high water, I rounded into the Ipswich River by cutting the corner close to Little Neck, aware that the chart showed this area fouled with rocks and on the hard at low tide. The water was so clear, I caught sight of boulders sweeping under me.

"Ready the helm, skipper; it won't do to shipwreck in the first hour."

I altered course toward the tightly paired buoys that marked the channel to the river, surprised to find this safe passage to be an incredibly narrow bottleneck for such a broad estuary. Once through, I saw the flood tide had covered the mudflats and sandbars, beckoning with navigable waters. A gaff-rigged daysailer worked a gentle breeze off Neck Creek, and I rowed along with a kayaker fishing from his boat.

Even on a weekday, the Ipswich River seemed to buzz with the popular Boston Whaler-type skiffs; 15' to 18' center-console boats running 60-150hp with impressive turns of speed. I decided to row into the quieter waters of Fox Creek, which branches off the Ipswich to form the western boundary of Castle Neck.

Atop Castle Neck is the fabulous grounds of Castle Hill, where in 1927, Chicago industrialist Richard Crane (bathroom fixtures) built a sprawling estate, complete with a 59-room mansion and Italian gardens. Among its many vistas, there is an overlook where one can view the estuary. Looking down on the meandering creeks that day, visitors might have noticed a little waterbug working its way along one of them and wondered, "Where did this tiny rowboat come from, and where on earth is he trying go?"

My more immediate company was a great blue heron. When Kate and I previously canoed the Sudbury River, we were thrilled when we would come upon one. Kate would hiss at me to be quiet while we fumbled for our cameras and binoculars, as if this magnificent survivor wasn't already aware of us when we were still around a bend a quarter-mile away.

Today, I tried to drift up close to observe it with the binoculars. This supremely dignified bird was looking at me with stern yellow eyes in utter contempt, as if I was an encroaching pervert. It was as motionless as if carved in wood, until it took flight. Then it lifted with slow, labored wing-beats, protesting with a primeval, raucous cry.

"Who could doubt they are descended from dinosaurs?"

As it flew away, it was still scornfully crying out to the world about another wretched white man creeping around in the marsh grass. It was as if some vestige of its DNA remembered a prehistoric time when it would have snatched me up, and casting my writhing shadow over the ground, fly to its perch to pick at my stringy flesh. It seemed to perceive me with such disdain, I wondered; did it hold me personally responsible for the destruction of habitat and species his lineage has witnessed?

"Hey, Mr. Eminent Blue Heron! It weren't me what killed off your cousins, the Great Auks and all. Just passin' through."

As the tide strengthened against me, I pulled through the elegant switchbacks of Fox Creek until it was too narrow to work the oars. On the way back out, I beached at the site of some ruins and ate my lunch, stretched my legs, and had some Campari spritz to refresh myself for the anticipated rigors of hauling out to Plum Island.

Feeling stouthearted, I rowed by the piles where Fox Creek merged into the Ipswich, now carrying along with a full running tide. I had been working on my rowing form for several months by then, and knew that when I exited the river, I would need to be in high gear to cross the ebb flow of the sound. I dialed up the engine room for Full Stride: power strokes that engaged the back, abs, legs, everything. I must say, it felt like I was in Olympic form going downriver, marveling at how graceful it feels to be rowing at full strength with sparkling boat speed.

"By the Hammer of Thor, I'm heaving oars like a Viking Warrior!"

Going with the venturi effect, I practically surfed back out through the tiny channel into the sound. A James Brown chorus with a driving horn riff was playing in my head, "I'm like a sex machine! I'm like a sex machine!" A sunbather wading in the waters off Crane's Neck commented favorably on my form and swiftness. I replied, "Well, I've got the tide fair, ya' know."

"Oh, I know," I heard him say as I swept out of voice range.

I knew from my sailing days to head high of my landfall to allow for tidal carry, and so turned to head straight up Plum Island Sound. A weatherbeaten skipper in a Whaler altered course and speed over to fall in alongside and chat about my beautiful dinghy and remarkable pace. I never broke stride as I acknowledge his compliments and briefly told him about the dinghy. I grinned as he powered away standing tall at the center console, throttling up over a hundred horsepower, quickly gaining automobile speeds on his joy ride, leaving me in quietude and his combustion stink. He was probably smiling, too, wondering what the lug-nut in the dinghy was trying to prove rowing mightily out in the Sound, boiling along in the ebb tide.

It was then I made the disconcerting observation that I wasn't making progress toward my intended destination. I took some range bearings on Crane's Neck and discovered I was fetching out to sea, except I would never get past the waves breaking on Plum Island Shoals. I remembered what the guy at the Foote Brother's Canoe Rentals had said when I asked him about my rowing plans. He told me the incoming tide backs up the natural flow of the river, so when the tide turns, it runs out much stronger.

Fox Creek.

"It's funny how stuff just comes to me sometimes..."

I was now flushing down the drain at the juncture of two estuaries emptying seaward under the lunar imperative. It's hard to believe that in 30 years of doing my own inimitable brand of boating, I never had to be rescued, a record that I hoped to keep unbroken. I dialed up the engine room again. "Scotty, I need more power!" I demanded.

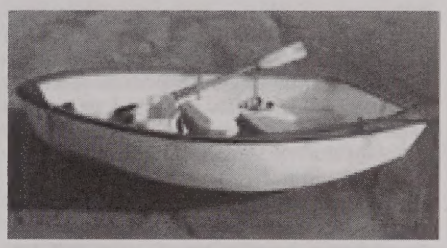
"Cap'n, we're giving it all we got."

"Dammit, Scotty, turn the dials up to eleven," I said, mixing my cultural references. "Aye, Cap'n, but we'll gonna blow apart."

So, I discovered a new rowing gear: Frightened Man Windmilling the Oars. This parallels the famous boating maxim, "What is the best bilge pump when your boat is sinking? "A frightened man with a bucket." I seriously wailed in my dinghy, taking its hardware and my soft tissues to the max. Progress was imperceptible at first, but we eventually clawed back to the shore at Great Neck where I had started the afternoon.

I cleated a line onto to somebody's moored fishing boat and regrouped with a tall Campari spritz. I still wanted to make Plum Island (and redeem my ruffled seamanship) but the sun was getting low. The tide was weakening as the Sound emptied out, and from here, I had a straight shot across just one tidal basin. I cast off and a little later dragged my boat up on the excellent sand of Plum Island, staggering around for some sunset photos. I only stayed a few minutes, mindful that I had to row back, carry my boat across the clam flats, and load up before dark.

I went home happy from a fulfilling day of messing about in boats, exhausted for sure, but high on rowing. I was already planning my next launch from the Town Landing. My imagination (temporarily) ran away from my budget as I began shopping Craig's List for a proper rowing dory, perhaps one I could rig with a wee outboard motor, but only for backup. With such a vessel under my command, no waters in the entire estuary would be safe from my slashing oars!



My redoubtable dinghy on the fine sand of Plum Island.

Man out taking his dinghy for a walk. A gust of wind would have him dancing around in an entertaining way that makes it such a good spectator sport to hang around boat ramps.

Sure, a kayak would make a lot of sense... to someone not born a natural trucking man.

The Black Schooner

Living on the Edge with Sara B

By Susan Peterson Gately

This exerpt from a sailing memoir which details our life in service to an elderly gaffer, the Nova Scotia built *Sara B* on New York's side of Lake Ontario. This passage details the little schooner's last sail with us in the fall of 2009 after her faithful but impossible to get parts for, British Diesel was no longer operable.

Charlie had assured us relining the clutch should not be a big deal if we could find a shop that would tackle a non-standard job like this. It took a while, but we did eventually locate such a shop through a chance conversation with a volunteer on the Sea Scout Schooner *Lotus*. His boss was up to the job and willing to do it.

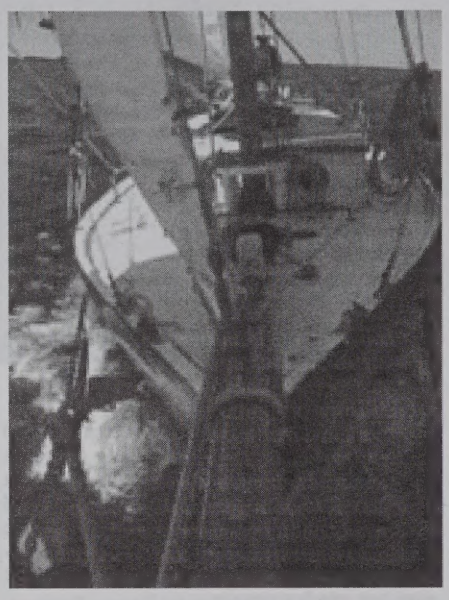
But then we had to figure out how to separate the tranny from the rest of the engine. Oh, how we wished we had the engine manual that Charlie said he had once owned. Alas, it had long since departed the scene. Once more my spouse began searching the Internet, this time for Thornycroft listings. I followed suit and one of us, I think it was me, stumbled across an antique truck collectors group in England that in a stroke of incredible good fortune, included one member with marine engine expertise. A kindly Brit named Lorryman promised to contact "Simon" and sure enough, a day or two later a PDF of the RJD2 manual had landed in my mailbox. Without its drawings and diagrams, we might well never have gotten the tranny out intact.

After a lengthy tussel in which two expensive ratchet handles were broken, many bad words were uttered, and some blood was shed, the engine was separated from the support beds, and the offending part was extracted and sent off to the friendly machine shop which began what turned out to be a lengthy repair process involving a number of custom made pullers, dies, and other parts for disassembling, riveting on the new lining, and reassembling the British made antique.

Weeks became months, and as the season dwindled, we watched the spiders rig their webs on every part of our boat. Summer faded into September and we missed the old girl. We pondered getting *Sara B* out and back into her dock in the weedy shallows by sailing, line handing, grapples, bolting an outboard on to her, using sweeps or a push pole, or some other technique. Our unwieldy vessel's long keel, gaff rig, and projections at both ends gave us pause. With nine tons backing up that bowsprit and no brakes things could get ugly. Yet. we knew engineless schooners far larger than our little 47 footer were (and still are) routinely maneuvered in close quarters using sails, tugs and yawl boats. And skill. The old timers did it, all we needed was a little shove in and out of the dock.

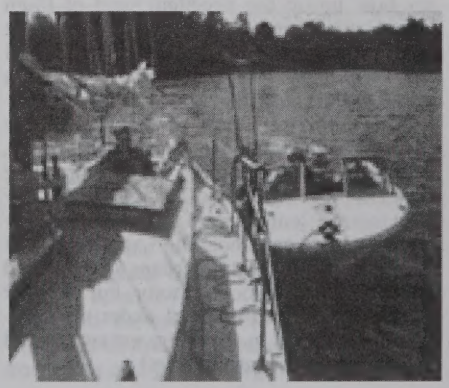
While gazing upon our old yacht one evening during happy hour, Chris proposed since we were a little short in the skills department that we go buy a tug for her. A check of Craig's List the next morning revealed a wealth of cheap old runabouts, and two days later we owned a 15' 1972 Mark Twain runabout with a 70hp outboard. We equipped *Tug* with a half-dozen oversized ash cleats and four Geo ties, launched her that weekend and motored to the dock. The plan, lash her alongside, use reverse to pull out, then swing around and head for open water. What could go wrong? Actually quite a lot it turns out.

As we prepared to cast off, the schooner crew asked the tug driver what's next. "I have no idea" he replied. "I'm making this up as I go." Surprisingly, the first outing went quite well. Our departure from the dock on a day of light wind was uneventful, and we anchored *Tug* and raised sail without mishap, (though at least thirty spiders fell to their deaths). *Sara B* slipped off with a whisper of her bow wave and a few quiet creaks of leather and wood from the gaff rig. We were sailing again. It felt grand!



When it was time to head back we sailed alongside *Tug* as if she were a mooring and picked up a line buoyed off to the anchor. We then lashed up and pushed back to the dock. In the calm of the bay the process was uneventful and the crew of the *Sara B* was considerably emboldened. We gotta try this again!

Sailing without an engine requires a different mindset. We can't hurry when the winds are light. If we have an appointment at 2pm, allow for being becalmed. We had better know our vessel's turning radius under sail too, if the outboard refuses to start and we have to sail onto the dock while towing the tug. Leave extra room on a shifty day near shore lest we get caught aback or miss stays, and have at least one if not two backup plans. Anticipation and vigilance are essential for engineless sailing. Quick thinking and improvisation help. Having a cell phone along is probably a good idea also. We got cocky after a couple of light air excursions within the protected bay and made a couple of forays into the open lake. They proved humbling.



The following Sunday was a day of sapphire blue water, 10-12 knot steady sweet onshore winds and perfect sailing. A dozen white winged sloops were tacking up the bay on the breeze as we trooped out on the dock with picnic lunch and gear. Three "sailors" plus two guests and a dog climbed aboard and once again made a smooth exit from the dock. It seemed to me we were leaving the dock better than on some of our 'normal' departures with the Diesel. A few wakes bounced *Tug* around on *Sara B's* quarter as we pushed up the bay, but the lashup survived. We pushed through the channel and entered the wide blue lake. At last. Freedom.

It took several tries to anchor on the rocky bottom but at last the anchor caught. We taped a note, "Be Back Soon", on *Tug*, cast off, and hoped she would be there when we returned. If someone hijacked her or she dragged, we figured we'd at least be able to sail ourselves back into the bay with the onshore breeze. Wonder if it was smart to leave the key in the ignition?

Sara B romped off with real enthusiasm and pointed her bowsprit for Canada. The lonely little white runabout festooned with Geo tires bobbing around in the open lake quickly dwindled to a white speck and then was gone. It was wonderful to really sail again. She put her rail down and stepped along smooth and easy and in no time we were five miles offshore. Sure was nice to sail in a straight line for more than ten minutes. We broke out the crackers and lemonade and celebrated. The brief fall afternoon spun away astern and daylight dwindled. We noted that the sun was getting low and the thought occurred we really should go in before the wind dies.

We reluctantly turned *Sara B* homeward. She surged along on a broad reach and as we approached *Tug* we remarked that the lake had kicked up and the wind sure hadn't dropped any. Man, this is really getting bouncy, look at that little boat jumping around. How is the driver going to get in there? A collision at sea and a sunken runabout seemed like a real possibility.

Our first pass at the buoyed off pickup line missed by 75'. The second and third passes also missed. "Four is my lucky number," announced the helmsman as we approached the buoyed line once again. This time we snagged it, though in the ensuing melee the flogging jib sheet sent my eye glasses overboard. *Tug* was dancing alongside with real vigor as the driver belatedly donned a life jacket and waited his chance to get aboard while we tried with the boat hook to keep her from bashing *Sara B*. The tug driver finally disembarked and this time the motor started immediately. We cast *Tug* off and turned to at weighing anchor, no simple task in my myopic state. When it was all finally over and we were back at the dock, one guest announced she was NOT sailing with us again until the Thornycroft was back on line. The other said that the day had been seven-eighths fun, which was probably a pretty charitable assessment.

Well, that one was a little more exciting than we had bargained for. But we were game to try again. It sure was fun to sail the old girl and the novelty of trying to use our brains as we attempted to get *Sara B* from point A to point B without her engine had not yet worn off. Still, after the latest outing I was beginning to appre-

ciate just how sharp those old timers were as they managed their unwieldy ships.

The next Sunday, the weatherman predicted 10-13mph winds from the south. Perfect mild weather, flat water, nice easy sailing, lets go! We took along two experienced crew for this one and expected a sweet gentle September sail. We hoped to make a day of it and arranged to meet at the dock at 9am. When we assembled, we noted the wind stirring the treetops looked a tad stronger than 10mph. Maybe more like 20. Well, that's ok. We'll just reef the main as a precaution. We can always shake it out. This time I served as tug driver for my first time. The plan was push *Sara B* out of the dock, then follow her out into the lake where she would anchor and I'd come along side to shift the anchor to *Tug*. We'd be under the lee of the land with nice flat water this time so it should be dead simple. Piece of cake.

In the open bay with a puffy brisk wind *Sara B's* crew raised just reefed main and staysail. She bolted off on a broad reach, and I followed the old girl down the bay. Alone she ran. No other sailboats had ventured out into that fresh south wind on the bay on a late September morning. I had seen *Sara B* under sail before, but never when she was moving this fast. She leaned to the wind like an old racehorse rounding the curve, and powered down the bay.

Some sailboats churn and froth through the water, but *Sara B* simply flowed. She slid along with such grace I couldn't take my eyes off her. She leaves no tracks, even at hull speed. I watched her transformed from an old, slightly odd looking, boat at the dock into an object of power, life, grace and beauty the fall sunlight gleaming on her ebony flanks. Her former names came to mind: *Dream*, *Chasseur*, she was on the run, possibly her last for a long time to come and surely at least one gull wept with envy at her effortless flight.

But out in the lake when she was hard on the wind, progress was not effortless. She put her rail down and slogged. Under the land's lee the crew opted to tie in a second reef. With *Tug* anchored in 10' in a nice mud patch, we raised sail again and fell off on a reach. *Sara B* stepped along smartly under a scrap of sail as little white caps blossomed on the green water around us. In minutes we were a half-mile offshore and well on our way to Oswego. Maybe we ought to go the other way close hauled and see what it's like. We tacked around and headed back and upon feeling the full weight of the wind while close hauled and hearing it whistle through her rig, we said you know it's kinda brisk out here. Let's bag it. Let's just see if we can GET back into the bay!

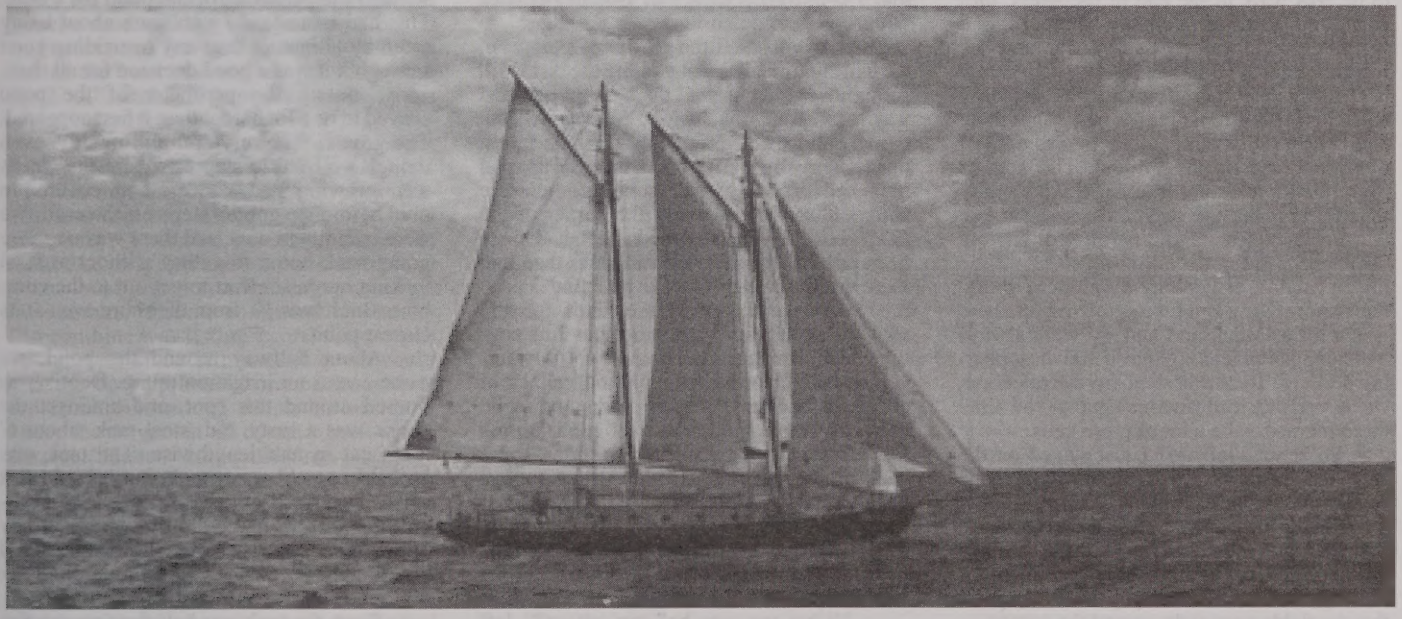
We beat our way upwind to *Tug* and lashed alongside uneventfully in the calm water. Then we headed for the channel. As we turned upwind against gusts to 25 knots plus, *Tug* bounced and plunged through the chop and strained hard to shove nine tons of wood and gaff rigged windage up the channel. We crawled along barely maintaining steerage and when the bow tried to fall off were able to crab her around again and keep moving. I watched the homemade cleats and the tight stretched spring line closely. Everything held, though one tire kept popping out of place. They made good sturdy fiberglass motorboat decks in those days.

It was slow going though, and *Tug* sucked up the fuel doing it. About halfway in, the driver hefted the tank and found it alarmingly light. Wow. Hope we don't run out of gas. We had started out with at least four gallons! We decided once in the bay we would drop *Tug* so she could go get some more gas. We then would tack up to the dock. We did make it into the bay after a very long and slow slog up the channel.

Once inside, we raised sail and plugged along upwind towards the dock again under double reefed main and staysail and hooked up with the refueled *Tug* for an uneventful tow into the dock. There we declared that was about as interesting as we wanted to make it.

That was our last sail with *Sara B*. A few weeks later we hauled her out for the winter. We also got some bad news from the machine shop. After the machinist disassembled the mechanism, he found the cast iron clutch drum was cracked. Suddenly the "routine" re-lining job had become far more problematic. As had the future of *Sara B's* engine...

The rest of the story is available in *The Black Schooner*, 130 page paperback book on sale at www.chimneybluff.com. Visit *Sara B* on Facebook for additional information on our messing activities.



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Quicksand, Alligators & Piranhas

By John Tuma

My cousin Jeff and I were always in trouble. We didn't try to get in trouble, it just sort of happened that way. Two incidents stand out. One was when we got arrested, but that isn't what this story is about. This story is about the time we went boating without permission.

The boat in question was my first boat, or rather, our first boat, since it was a jointly held asset. We were in for equal shares, which was probably good, since that meant there were no clear lines of responsibility. I sure wouldn't have wanted to bear the full wrath of our parents; a half share was more than enough.

My Uncle Mort and Aunt June lived about 50 miles from us, and I only saw Jeff when we all got together for big family parties, which, as everyone knows, are trouble waiting to happen. The adults would start talking, and sometimes they'd play cards or games, and usually there was a bit of drinking, so we kids were left largely unsupervised. In the long boring time between when everyone would arrive and we would all sit down to dinner, we cousins were left to figure out how to entertain ourselves.

I was 11 years old at this time, and Jeff was 10. My family had just moved into a new house out at the edge of town, a place where immature suburban landscapes rubbed shoulders with lots of open farmland. It was a glorious place to be a kid, and there were always adventures to be found, most of which involved trouble of one sort or another.

I remember telling Jeff that all we had to do was walk to the end of the street, turn right, and go down a couple of blocks, and we'd be out in the fields. So, of course, he had to see for himself.

It was February, and it was probably cold, but what I most remember is that there had been a lot of rain, and there was a lot of water pooling on the ground. The grasses in the fields were tall, the fields were really muddy, and at first we didn't dare venture out there, for fear of getting dirty or sinking in quicksand. I don't know much about the understanding of geology by modern youth, but I know that when I was growing up, there was a lot of quicksand and we were always worrying about sinking into it and disappearing forever. To the best of my recollection, we never did lose anyone, but at the time there seemed to be a lot of close calls.

So at first Jeff and I just stayed on the path that ran through a greenbelt on the edge of the housing development. We threw rocks for a bit, which landed with a most satisfying, "thwup", as they got swallowed up in the gooey mud, but we could only throw rocks for so long, and I had already proved my point that the fields were right around the corner.

Throughout the time that we had been throwing rocks, we had continued walking, and pretty soon we came to the place where the pavement ended and it was all open fields from there to Woodland, about 10 miles away. This was further than I had ever ventured, and it was all pretty exciting, but we had seen the fields and it was time to get back home. At this point, neither of us was particularly dirty, and we had learned long before that there was a tolerable level of mud and staining that we could attain without garnering undue attention. Since we hadn't crossed that threshold, and since we wouldn't be late, returning now would make a lot of sense.

Generally speaking, though, I wouldn't wager a lot of money on the sensibilities of a 10-year old and an 11-year old, especially when they are working on a vexing problem together. This time was no different.

"You ever been around that corner?" Jeff asked, pointing to a bend in the dirt road that continued on from the end of the pavement.

"No. This is the farthest I've ever gone." I considered the situation. Since I was older than Jeff, I was expected to be wiser. It was a dreadfully heavy burden. "What time do you think it is? Think it's dinnertime? Maybe we should be getting back."

"Yeah, you're right," said Jeff. "But I sure would like to see where that dirt road goes." He paused for a moment. "Think there's any quicksand out there?"

"Pretty sure there is. But my friend Kenny said you can tell where the quicksand is by looking at the animal tracks. You can see where the tracks go in, and then they disappear, and don't come out the other side." Jeff nodded. The argument made intuitive sense.

"Paul from next door said he heard the same thing," probably from Kenny. Since just about everybody I knew was telling me that we could identify quicksand from disappearing animal tracks, I felt pretty confident that I could keep us out of trouble, at least with respect to quicksand.

As we debated the merits of going on, we had continued walking along the dirt road, so by now going around the bend in the road was a foregone conclusion. We rounded the corner, and discovered, to our amazement, that there really wasn't much to see. The road branched off in two directions, there were some old, gnarled trees in the corner of the field between the two roads that had once been part of a windbreak, and other than that there was just a lot of weeds and mud.

I stopped to survey the fields for any sign of something interesting, but Jeff continued on down the road to the right. My survey revealed nothing, though not for lack of effort, so I picked up some rocks and stood there, idly tossing them into the mud waiting for Jeff to come back. When he didn't come back after what seemed like a long time, I began to get worried. I know I had explained to him the finer points of identifying quicksand, but maybe he hadn't been listening. I ran up the road, fearing the worst, calling Jeff's name.

"What are you hollerin' about?" Jeff asked. "I'm just right here." Jeff was off the side of the road, crouched by the edge of a pond. He had a long tree branch with which he was trying to discern the depth of the water, but without much success since it kept floating to the top. One thing was clear, though. The water was pretty deep.

"Look out there!" Jeff pointed out into the middle of the pond, which was really just a low spot at the corner of the field that had filled with water. "It's some kind of tractor." Jeff paused for a moment. "What do you think happened to the driver? Think he's still stuck out there?"

I looked to where Jeff was pointing. There was an old broken-down combine squatting in the muddy water, slowly sinking into the muck. Both the pond and the tractor had been hidden from view because the weeds were tall and we were short.

"No, I don't think he's still out there. Sure hope he didn't get caught in some quicksand." I scanned up the road. "I don't see any footprints."

"Maybe we should find out. I'd hate to leave him if he's still our there." Jeff had point. There was no one better qualified than us to make sure the driver was safe, at least no one nearby. Besides, we needed a reason to undertake the dangerous task of exploring the combine, and that was as good a reason as any. "How do you think we should get out there?" Jeff continued.

"Well, we're gonna need a boat," I said. "There's probably quicksand at the bottom of that pond, and there might be some alligators or even some piranhas in the water." Jeff looked up at me alarmed.

"Kenny said that Paul told him that there were alligators in the fields when he first moved out here. I believe him, 'cause Paul's house was one of the first ones built."

So it was decided then. We would have to explore the tractor to make sure that the driver was okay, but we'd have to have a boat or almost certainly we'd be eaten by alligators before we even had a chance to sink into the quicksand. This was turning out to the best adventure ever, and all thoughts of returning home for dinner clean enough and on time enough were completely forgotten.

About the only sensible thing we did that day was decide to stay together while we scouted the perimeter of the pond for a boat. This had more to do with fears about being eaten by alligators than any overriding good sense, but it was a good decision for all that.

Scouting the perimeter of the pond proved to be a lot harder than it first appeared. The ground was very soft and muddy, even though we tried to stay up where the weeds were growing, and we were both covered in mud before we got ten steps off the road. We were committed now, and there was no sense going back home this dirty without at least making our best effort to get out to the combine. But it was 30' from the shore even at its closest point.

About halfway around the pond, we came across an irrigation pump. Debris was littered around this spot, and amongst the debris was a rusty, old, steel tank, about 6' long, cut in half lengthwise. The tank was probably an old water tank, but it could just as easily have been used for carrying pesticides or fertilizer. We didn't care about any of that. The tank was half floating in the pond with maybe 3" of water sloshing around the bottom. Here was our boat!

Since the tank was half floating, we figured that it would be no problem to push it into the water the rest of the way, hop in, and pole our way across. Jeff still had his tree branch, which he had carried along in case of alligators, so he was set. All we needed was another long stick, and we'd be ready to go. I rooted around for a bit in the debris around the pump, but all I could find was a piece of 2"x4" about 3' long. It would have to do.

While I was searching for my stick, Jeff had been trying to push the tank off the mud and into the water. But the tank was stuck, and even using his stick to pry it off didn't work. "How about if I get in, and try to paddle while you push," I suggested. Jeff nodded. I carefully clambered over the sharp edge of the tank, and with my feet splayed against the sides a few inches above the water

in the bottom, I slowly worked my way out to the end. With each alternating step, the tank would rock first one way and then the other. The combination of me inadvertently rocking the boat, along with my weight at the floating end of the tank, was just enough to break the tank free from the suction of the mud. But with the tank no longer level, the water came rushing down to my end of the boat, causing it to tip even more sharply in my direction.

By now I was pretty scared. The round bottom was not very stable, and every time I moved the boat would rock back and forth, the motion amplified by the water that was swirling around my feet. But Jeff was elated. "Okay. Hold on. I'm gonna to get in." Jeff tossed his stick into the boat and gave it a little nudge as he climbed in over the end. The boat slowly eased off the shore, and I was sincerely hoping that Jeff wouldn't tip us into the alligator and piranha-infested waters. All thoughts of paddling were secondary. The boat rocked wildly once or twice, but with Jeff's weight now on the shore-side end, the water that had been lapping at my feet flowed back the other way, and the bottom of the tank settled once again into the thick, clay mud. With that, the boat stopped rocking and we stopped moving.

"Well," I thought, "that's no fun." My momentary terror was replaced with supreme disappointment. How were we ever going to rescue the driver if we couldn't even get our boat off the muddy bank? Jeff tried to push us off with his stick, but the stick just sank ever deeper into the mud and the boat just sat there. It was quicksand for sure. I leaned over the end of the boat and started paddling with my 2"x4", and Jeff kept pushing with his stick, but nothing worked. Finally, I suggested that Jeff slowly shift his weight toward me. Maybe we could float off.

Jeff took a couple of steps in my direction, and that was all we needed. The boat floated free. I paddled hard to get us off the bank, and then Jeff moved back to his end of the boat and started poling us toward the combine while I continued to paddle. The combine was listing to one side, which was perfect since it meant that we could tuck the boat up behind one of the wheels and climb onto a long board that ran from where the driver sat all the way back along the side. "Hello?" I squeaked, not at all sure I wanted to find anyone to rescue. Nothing. "Hello!" I said, louder this time, a little more confident we had the tractor to ourselves. Still nothing. It was clear that the driver either had jumped to safety before the tractor crashed into the pond, or else he'd been eaten by alligators. I climbed onto the running board, and started working my way forward to the driver's seat. Jeff climbed up after me.

The driver's seat was a wooden bench, about 3' long. There were three or four long levers with grip handles that had been used for controlling the combine, but they were rusted up, and we couldn't move them at all. Even so, we had a grand time pretending that we were driving, and when that got boring, we left the driver's seat and explored the rest of the tractor, clambering all over the outside, and even poking our noses into the inside. But eventually, we realized that the sun was going down, and it was time to go.

"You know," I said, "it's getting dark."

"Yeah," answered Jeff. "It's probably time to go."

The boat was where we left it, which was good, since we had not thought to tie it to anything. Getting back into the boat was a bit tricky. It sure looked like there was more water in the thing than there had been, but it was hard to say since we had never checked for leaks. After studying the situation for a moment, Jeff turned backwards so that he could lower himself into the boat while still holding onto the running board. The boat was pretty tender, especially with the water in it, but he managed to plant his feet firmly on both sides of the boat above the water. From there he retreated to the back of the boat and picked up his stick so that he could hold the boat steady while I got in.

I lowered myself into the boat, and gave us a firm push to get us moving. "You, know," I said, "since we have the boat, we should circle the entire pond and check for tracks." Jeff nodded in agreement. So he poled and I paddled, and we circled the tractor and explored every inch of the shore, but we didn't see a single track, either from the driver or from an animal that had gotten caught in the quicksand. This whole operation didn't take more than ten minutes, but by then it was clear that we were taking on water. As much fun as it was, we needed to park the boat and get back for dinner. We pole-paddled back over to the spot by the irrigation pump where we first found the boat, and beached it the same way we had gotten it off the bank.

Jeff climbed out and I followed. We said goodbye to our trusty (rusty) vessel, picked out way among the weeds back over to the road, and headed for home. We caught hell when we got there, too. Dinner was done, we'd missed the birthdays and the cake. My Aunt June, who was never shy with her opinions, let us have it. All of our other parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles glared silently in the background as Jeff and I slumped lower and lower in our chairs.

". . .and we're really disappointed in you. What were you thinking?" Both of us sat there, a bit shocked. We expected to get in trouble, but not like this. We'd already been home for 15 minutes, and no one had offered us dinner. The situation was increasingly grim.

"Well?!" Aunt June demanded.

"I, uh... wanted to show Jeff the fields," I started, haltingly. "And we found this tractor..." I stopped under Aunt June's withering stare. My own parents seemed disinclined to help me.

"The tractor was stuck in the mud," blurted out Jeff, coming to my rescue, "and it was surrounded by a big pond, so we had to find a boat to see if the driver was okay after crashing into the pond."

"Yeah, we had to have a boat, because there was all this quicksand, and Kenny said we could know it was quicksand by the animal tracks."

"Yeah, that's right," said Jeff.

I was watching my father as Jeff was talking about rescuing the driver, and I knew then we were going to be okay. Uncle Mort and Uncle Cliff were nodding slowly in the background. The argument made intuitive sense. We couldn't just leave the driver there, they'd all have made the same decision if presented with the same facts and the same opportunity. However, none of them were likely to intervene, either, and so far Aunt June, Aunt JoAnne, and my mom were not persuaded by our compelling argument. The grilling went on for another ten minutes or so, but we did eventually get dinner and even some dessert.

That old tank was as good a boat as any I've ever had. It was rusty, and sharp, and it leaked, but it got us there and it got us back. As ugly and dangerous as it was, the boat was a magic carpet to a great adventure. And the best part was that all the kids in the neighborhood knew that we had braved the alligators and piranhas and quicksand to explore the pond and the combine, because they could see where our tracks went in, and where they came back out.

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City Island, New York in 1933: The three major boatyards line the shoreline at the right in the photo.

My City Island Years

Part 1

By Fay Jordaens

Shortly after my parents came to City Island, NY in the 1920s they went into business operating several gasoline barges supplying gasoline to commuter boats, many of them built at the three major yacht building yards on City Island; Jacobs, Nevins and Minnefords. The three yards were adjacent to one another on the east side of the Island and were well known for their workmanship as well as their ability to build and service large racing schooners and yachts.

Of the three yards and the men who owned them, Robert Jacob's establishment was the first large yard to expand his services as he increased the size of his property. He built more sheds for specialized services and even offered George Ratsey a huge sail loft on the Jacob premises. He was on the Island by 1900 and turned out first class boats within a year.

Henry Nevins was on the Island by 1907 and within a year he had his own stable of extraordinary craftsmen as well as his own sail loft on the grounds at 205 City Island Ave. Nevins' first design was a 1907 55' yawl *Feu Follet*.

Henry Sayers Sr. of Minneford's Yacht Yard at 150 City Island Ave. was the last large competitive yacht builder to arrive in 1926. That same year he built his first boat, a sloop named *Margarita*. All of these yards became involved in building vessels for national and international races for wealthy individuals or for syndicates.

Each yard was involved with designing, building or servicing America's Cup defenders. The team effort between their superior craftsmen, the sail lofts etc. and, the pride that came with helping to turn out or service classic winning boats, cannot be over-estimated. It is remarkable that in the first half of the Twentieth Century, City Island attracted three premier yards, gifted designers, first class sail lofts, expert craftsmen who all converged on this tiny island and contributed to its reputation. As a result of the rich talent concentrated on this mile and a half long island for a brief, magical period of time known as the 'Golden Age of Yachting', City Island earned a place of recognition in the nautical history books!

Our family lived in a custom-built 40' houseboat that was moored between Jacobs and Hart Islands, the eastern City Island Harbor. Jacob's shipyard built it to accommodate our growing family. When my parents stepped onto their City Island gas barge for the first time that last day in May, 1926, they had no idea that they would come to count as customers some of the wealthiest families in the New York City area. They came to know and respect Robert Jacob, Henry Sayers and Henry Nevins as well as the master craftsmen in their yards. They acquired lifelong friends who skippered some of the most extraordinary yachts of that era. They enjoyed the America's Cup era of City Island and even had the pleasure of meeting and chatting with a congenial Sir Thomas Lipton. It was a unique time.

When the depression knocked out the large commuter boat business, and gasoline barges became a thing of the past, we still lived on boats, with my brother and I rowing to school, winter and summer. People always said to my brother and I, "Your live on a boat? Wow that must be so great!" Well, not really. When we lived on the big barge off the southern tip of City Island, our dad

The Esso Marine gas barge my family operated at City Island.

The houseboat where brother and I were born. My mother is standing astern, next to rather large icebox, with our rowboat off the stern, Hart Island in the background.

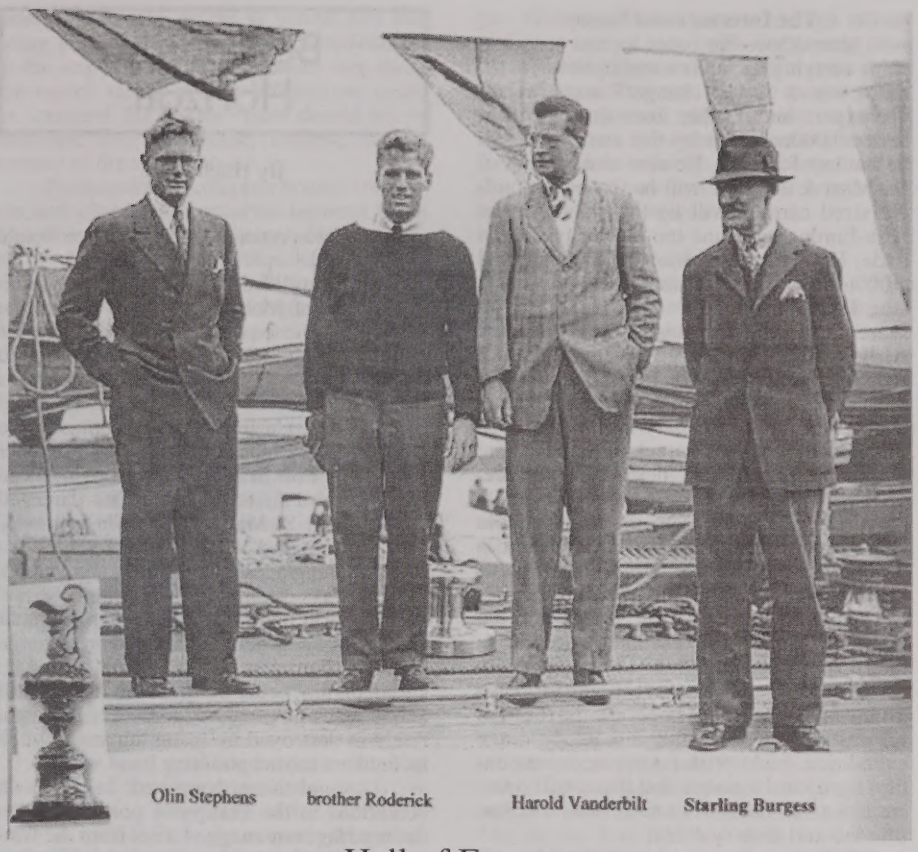
would put us ashore in winter by motorboat. We landed on the dock of the Morris Yacht Club and then trudged through 12"-14" of snow to finally get our frozen selves to the bus stop. When we lived on the northwestern side of the Island, we usually rowed to school. Sometimes we rowed in tandem, but when our schedules shifted we rowed solo.

Imagine starting off my rowing trip, newly pressed gym suit and books on the back seat when a sudden wind shift maliciously lifted up my gym wear and dumped it into the water? This meant I was not going to pass gym inspection! Actually, I kind of enjoyed rowing in gusty weather, as I was quite strong, but other challenges were not as entertaining.

Once when I was halfway to City Island, the skies opened up and a few buckets of rain dumped on me, totally destroying whatever neat appearance I might have had. I still had to row fast enough to catch the 8;20 bus to Columbus High School and worst of all had to deal with dirty, icy lines to secure my rowboat. I was really ticked off the day my wallet left my purse, just as I jumped into the rowboat and dropped to the bottom of the bay. But my worst experience was the day I joined some ice chunks when I fell into Eastchester Bay in February and damn near drowned.

Still, when I was 18 and lived in another state's college dorm, the one thing I deeply missed at night, was the sound of the water slapping up against the hull. However that was nicely balanced by the fact that I didn't have to row to school!

(To Be Continued)



Hall of Famers

Hall of Famers (left to right): Olin and brother Roderick Stephens with "Mike" Vanderbilt and Starling Burgess picture here in the late 1930s represents over a dozen America's Cup wins for America. Olin and Rod designed six winning boats that had eight wins. Ed Burgess and his son Starling were responsible for six America's Cup designs and Mike Vanderbilt was a winning skipper of several AC winners. This photo is a gift from Tom Nye.

Historic Vignettes

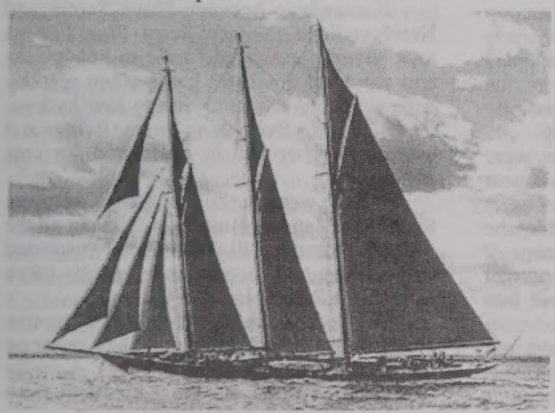
Word Record Setting Schooner *Atlantic*

In 1903, Naval Architect William Gardner of New York watched his newly designed boat, 227' LOA racing schooner *Atlantic* as it was launched. He hoped for an auspicious future. He had no way of knowing that his beautifully designed hull would set a trans-Atlantic racing record that would last for 95 years, or that *Atlantic* would one day be considered a masterpiece.

Atlantic had a 29' beam and carried 18,500sf of sail on her three masts. Her draft was 16-1/2' and her displacement was 298 tons. While she carried many luxuries which added to her tonnage, she still managed to win her 1905 cross-Atlantic race in 12 days, 4 hours, 1 minute and 19 seconds. In one 24-hour period, she averaged 14.1kts. *Atlantic* was skippered by City Islander Capt. Charlie Barr, who was also responsible for winning several America's Cup races. While *Atlantic* later on was berthed in several City Island yards in total disrepair, she was broken up at Newport Harbor, VA, on January 30th, 1982.

Seemingly, this marked the end of this prize winner. However Dutch yachtsman Ed Kastelein decided to recreate Gardner's masterpiece in Holland. Kasterlein chose Holland for the development of his boat because of the availability of resources in his country. On March 15, 2008, he launched his *Atlantic* after faithfully following Gardner's design plans.

The *Atlantic* in her prime...



Capt Charlie Barr

Capt Charlie Barr, who skippered the *Atlantic* setting that ocean crossing record that lasted for almost 100 years, also skippered *Columbia* to victory against the first Lipton *Shamrock* in 1899 and duplicated his success again in 1901 against *Shamrock II*, in the Herreshoff designed *Reliance*. This remarkable image of Capt. Barr (looks like a Brady?) was a gift to me from Tom Nye. Of all crazy coincidences Charlie Barr owned the home that became the Grants Boat Club, which my husband Frank Jordaens and I bought in 1956-57! (See coming installments)

And at her end.

Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

The International Scene

Maersk's recent order for ten container ships carrying 18,000teu and options for 20 more was a "game changer" according to one expert, and if other firms don't order at least 10,000teu ships by this summer it will be too late for them. He also said a result of the Maersk initiative will be that many middle sized carriers will be too small for the Asia-Europe trade and too big for intra Asia trade. He expects many of the 8,000teu and 4,000teu ships will be scrapped.

The French have not given up on searching for the remains of the Air France Airbus that disappeared over the South Atlantic while en route from Paris to Rio de Janeiro in 2009. An autonomous underwater vehicle (a remotely controlled mini submarine) located wreckage and some human bodies 12,800' below the surface. The search used three REMUS 6000 robots operated by a team from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute on the French ship *Alucia*. It was WHOI's third search for the downed airliner. The French cable ship *Ile de Sein* will continue the search for the plane's two black boxes. The *Alucia* is an interesting vessel. Built in 1974 as a heavy lift ship and launch/recovery platform for diving and submersible operations, the vessel was converted in 2009 into a long range expedition yacht with luxury accommodation for up to 16 guests, but it can still operate three submersibles and retains a scientific lab and dive systems.

If you are interested in drilling for oil, chartering a drill ship, perhaps Transocean's *Discoverer Spirit*, will cost you something like $520,000 per day. No wonder any ban on drilling causes great anguish to oil companies.

Thin Places and Hard Knocks

Ships sank: Off the coast of Belize, the Panamanian flagged, salt laden *Helga* sank, taking with it three of its crew of 11 Cubans.

Ships ran aground: Somehow the soya bean carrying bulker *Oliva* managed to run ashore on Nightingale Island at remote Tristan da Cunha in the South Atlantic. The crew of 22 managed to get off safely but the panamax bulker soon broke its back and 1,500 tons of bunker fuel started fouling seabirds, particularly Northern Rockhopper penguins. Bird cleanup forces soon arrived from South Africa, some 1,500 miles to the eastward. Some 20,000 penguins may be affected.

In the UK near the Isle of Wight, the 2,900-tonne freighter *Paula C* ran aground on a shingle bank near the Needles, luckily during the lowest tide of the year (aka an "astronomically low" tide). The tug *Wyeforce* helped it get free.

At Lerwick in the Shetland Islands, the large (2,403 tonnes) diving support vessel *Bibby Topaz* somehow managed to take a sharp turn as it passed the end of the harbor's jetty and ran aground. This was in spite of an assisting tug and the presence of a pilot. The vessel later floated free and none of the 100 on board was injured, but the planned voyage to the Gryphon oil field some 110 miles ESE of Shetland was deferred.

In the St Lawrence Seaway, the saltie *BBC Steinhoelft* lost control and ended up blocking the Seaway, its bow on one bank and stern against the other. Passage of eight ships was delayed until tugs arrived at the scene. The ship had been the *Beluga Fusion* when it entered the Seaway the previous week, but was renamed, probably due to sale of the vessel.

Ships collided: About five miles south of the Isle of Man the fishing vessel *Lynn Marie* and the coaster *Philip* met. The FV didn't sink but suffered extensive damage to its portside bow. It was kept afloat by pumps rushed to the scene by the Port St Mary lifeboat and HM Customs Cutter *Sentinel* while the Port Erin lifeboat stood by with another pump. The Port St Mary lifeboat then towed the FV, stern first because of its damaged bow, to Port St Mary. The *Philip* was relatively undamaged.

In Bangladesh at Chittigong, where there always seems some maritime disaster is happening, the North Korean freighter *Hyang Ro Bong* ran into the anchored *Bongo Lanka* in the outer anchorage and ended up sitting on the harbor bottom with its bow still afloat. Its cargo of 13,492 tonnes of Pakistani rice was destroyed by incoming water while its bunkers started polluting local waters.

Unusual things happened: In pre dawn conditions in the Philippine port of Cavite, the tug *Hagonoy* snagged a net from the fishing vessel *Aleja* and rammed the FV. One fisherman was missing but 66 other fishermen and tug crew members were rescued.

Gray Fleets

The short career to date of HMS *Astute*, the lead ship of a new class of British attack submarines, has been marred by numerous problems including a grounding that featured a collision with a rescuing tug. Last month the sub was busy hosting various civic dignitaries and no one noticed when a rating donned body armor and camouflage and took an assault rifle from the sub's armory; after all, he was obviously going on gangway guard duty. Instead, he started shooting, killing one of the sub's officers and critically wounding another. One of the visitors, the leader of the Southampton city council, reacted swiftly to the flying bullets and wrestled the sailor to the deck.

The engine of a Marine F/A-18C jet fighter exploded on the deck of the carrier *USS John C. Stennis* during a training exercise about 100 miles off California. Four injured sailors were flown to a shore hospital while six others were treated on the carrier. The jet's pilot was unharmed.

It was doubly embarrassing when the top of a steel mast on the destroyer *USS Gravely* snapped off just above the SRS-1 ring antenna because a video production team from the Discovery Channel was on board the recently commissioned (last November) warship.

The Japanese Self Defense Forces were going to send warships and other equipment to the nine day US-India Malabar naval exercise but decided that the needs created by the recent earthquake took precedence. Scope of the exercise was trimmed because important players such as the Japanese maritime surveillance aircraft were not available.

New Zealand and US ships have not operated together since a 1984 rift over nuclear matters so the attendance of the New Zealand naval vessel, the sealift and amphibious support vessel *HMNZS Canterbury*, surprised many when it participated in the Pacific Partnership exercise with units of the US Navy, Australia, and France. The exercise, created in 2004 after the Indonesian earthquake and tsunami, aims at providing humanitarian, medical, dental, and engineering assistance to nations of the Pacific. The kiwi nation has also been invited to participate in Rimpac 2012, a major, US led exercise featuring ships from many Pacific navies.

What to do with old aircraft carriers, to wit, *USS Constellation, USS Forrestal, USS Independence*, and *USS Saratoga,* is vexing US citizens. Some want to reef the ships as tourist attractions for sport divers and the Navy has sunk at least one carrier (the *USS America*) as part of live fire tests. Others think they should be recycled, stating that each carrier represents 40,000 tons of recyclable steel, aluminum, and copper. In fact, the Navy may be accepting bids for disassembly in shipyards. Each scrapping job could save millions of taxpayer dollars and create 1,900 jobs for a year.

White Fleets

Off Norway, an emergency crew arrived by boat to take a sick woman off the cruise ship *Ocean Princess* but they dropped her stretcher into the icy (-3°C) water. The British woman, suffering from internal bleeding, was picked up by the rescue boat in about eight minutes and made it to a hospital. At last report her serious condition was improving.

Forty kilometers off Queensland's Gold Coast, an "unwell" woman had a better ride as she was winched by helicopter from the *Rhapsody of the Seas* and taken to the Gold Coast airport.

An English female worker on the *Disney Wonder* failed to report for her shift and was considered to have been lost at sea.

At Port Canaveral in Florida, the 88,500-ton *Carnival Pride* was buffeted by 85mph winds. The company later admitted that conditions had "caused the ship to become disengaged from its moorings." No word on whether any gangways fell but nobody was injured.

Those That Go Back and Forth

The operator of a ferry service from Cape Cod to Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard fiercely opposed construction of a 130 wind turbine complex in Nantucket Sound but, now that the complex will be built, he recently announced that he will run eco tours of the wind farm using a new build hybrid boat. Tiny Denmark has 6,000 wind turbines and observers have noted that they tend to fascinate tourists and boost tourism.

Somewhere between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland the new ferry *Blue Puttees* took several unexpected rolls in heavy seas and winds of about 60 knots when a stabilizer suddenly retracted due to low hydraulic oil level. Everything went flying and a crew member had to be treated for cuts and bruises.

Off the western shore of the UK between the Isle of Man and Birkenhead, a man on the *Ben-My-Chree* fell ill and a doctor suspected appendicitis and recommended he be taken ashore. An RAF helicopter obliged.

In New Zealand, while on a routine crossing of Cook Strait, a male passenger on the *Aratere* started having seizures. A medic was winched down onto the ferry's deck from

a helicopter, the man was stabilized, and both medic and patient were winched back up into the Westpac Rescue helicopter for a swift flight to a Wellington hospital. There the man was treated and discharged.

At Galway harbor three men were hurt when one of two straps snapped while a ship's crane was lifting the former Aran Island ferry *Clann nan Oileain* onto the cargo ship *Thor Gitta*, and the ferry's stern smashed back about nine metres into the water. The men were aboard the ferry at the time of the accident. The *Thor Gitta* was at Galway specifically to collect the ferry and its sister ship, the *Clan Eagle 1*, for transport to foreign buyers. The accident happened less than a week after the 7,000gt *Pentanal* broke free while anchored and ran aground. It had arrived in South Connemara to collect the two Aran Island ferries.

In New Zealand at Auckland, conservation authorities used three dogs and their handlers to check athletes getting on a ferry to nearby Rangitoto and Motutapu Islands for mountain bike and running events. Object of the search? Rats. The islands are free of rats and mice and may soon be declared pest free sanctuaries for endangered wildlife, but a rat had recently been found in a van about to be ferried to nearby Motuihe Island, another of the several scenic islands outside Auckland.

In the Philippines in Cebu province, the 11,405gt ferry *Superferry 2* and a cargo vessel apparently tried to simultaneously squeeze through the entrance channel into the harbor at Talisay City but they sideswiped each other. None of the 435 passengers on the ferry were hurt but damage was substantial. Containers on the cargo vessel *General Romulo* were ripped open and their contents dumped into the sea. Local fishermen then enjoyed a short term bonanza by salvaging cartons of Bear Brand powdered milk and selling them locally. This was more profitable than the fishing.

Nature

The 8.9 magnitude Japanese earthquake caused global positioning stations closest to the epicenter to jump eastward by up to 13' so Japan is "wider than it was before," and NASA scientists calculated that the redistribution of mass by the earthquake might have shortened the day by a couple of millionths of a second and tilted the Earth's axis by nearly 4". Another effect: water in the Edwards Aquifer in Texas was displaced about a foot as the underground rock formation was squeezed by the far off quake. This and other aquifers often reflect distant earthquakes.

Videos showed numerous fishing vessels and coasters being driven ashore by the Japanese tsunamis and one report stated that the Panama flagged general cargo vessel *Victory* was washed aground in the Port of Ishinomaki, the Panamanian general cargo vessel *China Steel Integrity* and the Panamanian *Asia Symphony* had grounded at Kamaishi, the Japanese bulker *Shiramizu* had grounded at Soma, and the Panamanian flagged *Shirouma* was also aground at Haramachi. Thirty-one crew were rescued from the Italian *Sider Joy* adrift at the Ishinomaki Dockyard, the Panamanian *Golden Grace* was adrift at Kashima, the Chinese container vessel *Long Mu Wang* was adrift at Kushiro, and the Panamanian *Coral Ring* bulker collided with a berth at Onahama. The 26,000gt bulker *Sider Joy* had been launched at the Yamanishi Shipbuilding and Iron Works at Sendai and was being prepared for April sea trials. Damage to the shipyard and its equipment may mean the vessel, valued at over $20 million, could be scrapped. BTW, this vessel should not be confused with the smaller Maltese flagged coaster of the same name.

Floating debris (complete houses, containers, and whatnot) prompted the Japanese Coast Guard to warn ships to stay up to 90 miles offshore while passing the earthquake zone.

At Tampa, ospreys built a nest atop the end of a boom, thereby keeping the barge mounted crane from doing profitable work, the owner estimated that a week's delay cost him $20,000. Under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act it is illegal to transport ospreys or their nests without permission. Working with the National Audubon Society, he had a platform installed at the top of an old utility pole. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission signed off on the relocation but the US Fish and Wildlife Service denied his permit because the nest wasn't causing property damage. Then the Audubon Society decided the federal government's regulations didn't address such situations and concluded the state permit and the Audubon Society's support were enough to move forward with the nest relocation.

Three long beaked common dolphins died of blast trauma during a naval exercise off California. The Navy stated that there were no mammals in the exercise area when it started the countdown but acknowledged it had spotted the mammals before the explosives went off but not in time to stop the exercise without putting humans at risk.

Metal Bashing

A former marina owner and sailboat racer fell in love with the discarded 3,500 passenger Staten Island ferry *Gov. Herbert H. Lehman* and bought it at auction for $162,000. Sugar plum fancies danced through his head of converting it into a floating dormitory for college students but the realities of up to $1,000 a day for berthing privileges brought him crashing to earth. An offer on eBay brought 9,000 responses but no takers. He now says, "I like it but I can't sell it and I start to hate it." (Other former Staten Island ferries have been used for a methadone clinic and as prison ships.)

At Providence in Rhode Island, scrapping the old Soviet Juliet class cruise missile submarine *K-77* is proving to be tough. Already capsized and righted, the sub had a smoky fire when welders (more likely, cutters) set fire to fuel in the bilge and the fire spread to insulation. Firefighters had to call on the marine strike team since they couldn't reach the sub from shore. Scrapping started last fall and was expected to take three months.

Nasties and Territorial Imperatives

Hiring armed security guards is increasingly popular with shippers but that may lead to more lethal violence, perhaps even "small wars," predicted one expert. He envisions a quadrupling of hijackings and a change from opportunistic to "must accomplish at all costs" missions. Typical of today's Gilbert and Sullivan anti piracy policies was when members of the Dutch frigate *HNLMS Tromp*, flagship of the NATO anti piracy force, were fired upon when they tried to board a hijacked dhow. Returning fire, they boarded and found two fatally wounded pirates and ten others trying to escape in a skiff. They were captured and the dhow and its rightful crew were escorted to safe waters. Waiting there was the 1,066-teu container ship *Albedo*, captured last November. It hoisted anchor and headed for the Dutch warship. The *Tromp* fired a shot across its bow and the *Albedo* returned to anchor. End of news item.

Odd Bits

In February, the 269gt coaster *Nordland 1* grounded on a beach on the northwestern German Island of Borkum right in front of some beach hotels, "practically in their lobbies," as one person described the scene. The owner and the vessel's insurance company decided to scrap the vessel where it lay but a salvor proposed a quick solution without pollution risk. He was granted permission and the ship was afloat after only eight hours of work. Greatly pleased were all hands, especially the German Water and Environment authorities.

Using the same technology that allowed the US Navy to differentiate between a whale and an enemy vessel, retired US Navy sonar experts helped create a portable device to detect, diagnose, and monitor strokes in the brain. The device uses six accelerometers mounted on a head harness that hear the unique vibrations made by veins expanding and contracting, aneurysms wobbling, etc, and send the data to a personal computer. The device was 97.3% correct in identifying strokes and correctly ruled out 98.8% of normal patients. It can also separate patients with specific stroke conditions or vascular abnormalities into categories such as ischemia, hemorrhage, aneurysm, stenosis, and arteriovenous malformations. The device is ideal for ambulance and fieldwork such as in combat and sports.

Many years ago. Auckland boasted the *Aucklander*, a most modern steam tug, but the vessel had been delivered at the very end of steam's ascendancy and the tug was soon taken out of service as being too expensive to operate. Moved to Wellington, New Zealand's capital city, it became a floating restaurant. Years later, it will host the 2011 NZ International Comedy Festival and all 17 comedians will do their stuff below sea level in what was once the engine room.

Head Shakers

The UK is phasing out all its RAF and Royal Navy jump jet Harriers and their pilots (135 RAF, 50 Royal Navy) must find other jobs. The Ministry of Defence will give most (but not all) Harrier pilots a redundancy pay packet near the six figure range (18 months pay plus £30,000). The overlying rationale behind the generous payout is that there are so many Harrier flyers that it will be impossible for industry to absorb all of them. But 20 or so trainee Royal Navy Harrier pilots must accept lesser alternative jobs (often involving flying a desk) with the Senior Service or leave with nothing.

An error unwittingly gave the crew of a ship unrestricted access to the Internet. The crew, who had already been notified of the company's intentions regarding future Internet access on all its vessels, wrongly assumed that a new satellite unit had been provided for their unlimited use and proceeded to download at will. The monthly bill should have been $3,800. Instead, the first bill was for $436,000 for three months of service.

TRILOBOATS

Aweigh, Ye Carvey Dogs!

3D TriloBoat Models

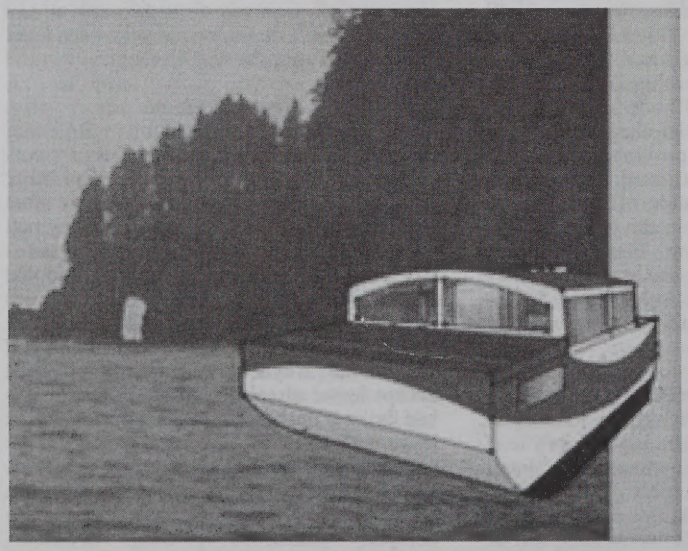
By Dave Zeiger
www.triloboats.com

I've prepared some videos using 3D models of various incarnations of the TriloBoat formula for your viewing pleasure on my website. They give a little idea of the range of applications for the basic, box barge hull form. To activate, click on the picture of the boat you'd like to view. Your computer's viewer should pick up and load the short video for playing. Please note that not all of these have plans associated with them, and I don't do custom work. At present, they're in the nature of doodles to a greater or lesser degree of finish.

If you purchase any one of the Study Plans I sell, they and the FAQ page contain the gist of TriloBoat design philosophy. This will be amplified in the forthcoming TriloBoats DIY Book (2011?) What's stopping you?

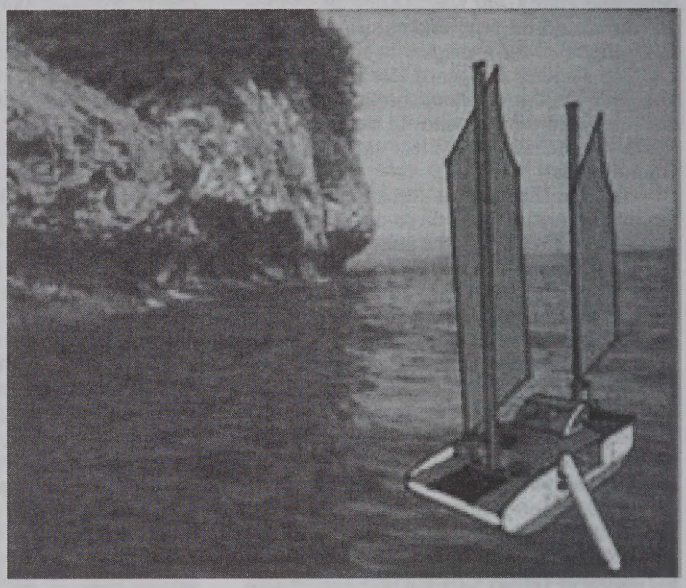
T16x4 Trilobyte

This is the design that started it all. We wanted a quick-to-build camper cruiser to build in Lago Maggiore, Italy (where Anke's mother lives). Never happened, yet, but had a lot of fun getting ready. The 8' cabin sole makes for comfortable sleeping for two, without the backache often associated with small, rocker bottom boats.



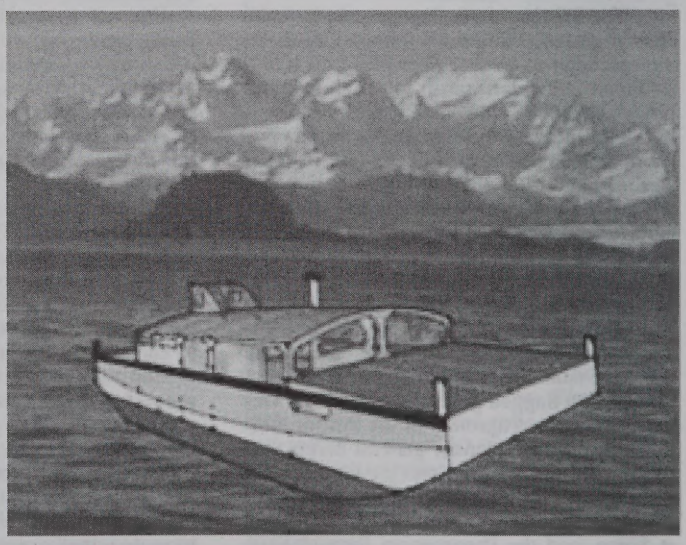
T24x8 Standard

This is what I call my "standard layout," referring to the hull divisions of one quarter forward, one half mid, one quarter aft. This generates plywood efficiencies, building with single-sized, longitudinal sheets. T24s, built with 8' sheets, are "three sheet boats." The interior is one sample approach. Dinette makes down to a double bed.



T26x7 Slacktide

Here's our current baby. Not a standard TriloBoat... we even broke the "one sheet wide" rule (I regret it, now... wasted time and material for unnoticeable gain). Our first year aboard has been great... this coming year we'll get to be sailing more. We'll keep you posted. The interior is tent-style, what James Wharram dubbed "flexi-space." We sit on the carpeted floor and lean on cushions. Roll out the bedding at night. If you like being close to the water, this is a fine way to live.

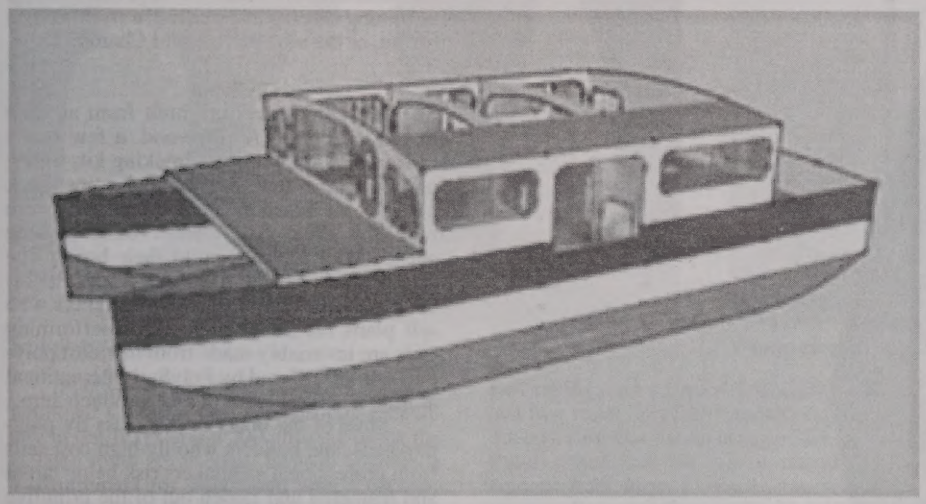


T32xl2 Mary Elisabeth

Andy Stoner built Mary Elisabeth with our help in ten winter weeks in Alaska. None of us are pros. He's had it out hunting and fishing, filled to the brim with Pennsylvanians. Good times had by all. Anke and I stayed aboard while building Slacktide. We were warm and comfortable through another winter. Great boat for big groups of friends. Andy designed his own interior to sleep eight (four forward in two double bunks, two in dinette and settee back swings up to sleep two in bunk beds... he's done it with a passel of big fellers!).

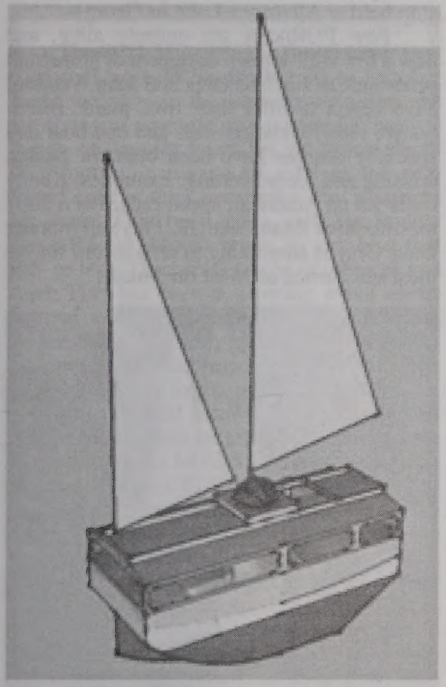
Additional Concepts

Here are a few designs that are on the drawing board at this point, no plans exist for them at the moment.



T40x20 Catamaran

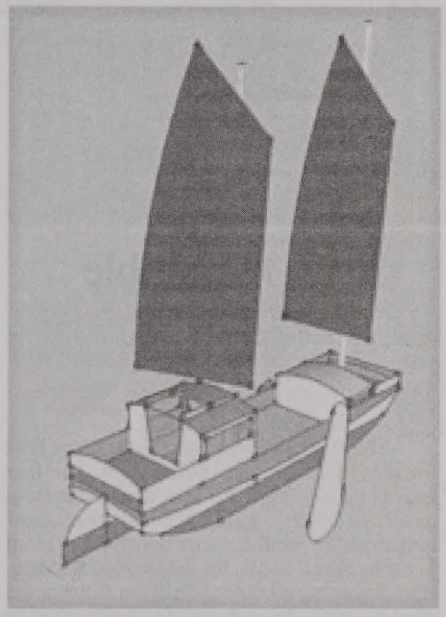
This is a design my sister has been considering. Both hulls are TriloBoat formula (T40x4), with step-cutwaters under the bows. These would be sacrificial glassed foam or ply add-ons, or could be eliminated with lower bow rise. Safety and hand rails and ladders (into the ama wells) aren't shown. Considering roller-furled twin stays'l rig. Note that the engineering of the cabin/bridge needs to be reviewed by professional naval architect (don't try this at home, kids!).



Tl0x4 B'Tugley

This hopeful monster was doodled for the AIT (Around in Ten) Race. At the time, the deadline was approaching, and it had to be buildable in two months to qualify (the race has been delayed). Also, some entrants were low-budget adventurers. I believe B'Tugly could be a contender in any event.

It's main feature is the mid-body well, into which one can strap oneself when the going gets wild. It maximizes interior space and view. Not shown are the probable bearing board and trim tabs aft (to keep the end from squatting in a planing run) and rudder plate. I'd probably use a different sail plan... just tried this one on for size. Cat yawl or stays'l rigs fit the interior.



T32x8 Cargo

This doodle was inspired by the folks at www.sailtransportcompany.com who are running cargo under sail around Puget Sound, Washington. It's designed for a working crew (not a liveaboard) to carry goods and/or materials.

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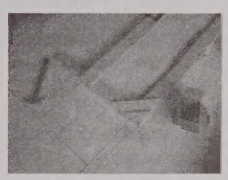

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Did I mention cabins?

The Incredible PDRacer

By Dave Gray

I don't understand why *Messing About in Boats* is not flooded with stories about the incredible PDRacer. When it comes to messing about in boats, there seems to be more interest in building and sailing these little boats than any other single class of home-built boats in the world these days. Old geezers are reliving their racing days in them. Adventurers are sailing 200 miles up the Texas coast in them. Scouts are building their own fleets. Family boat building events often focus on them. Last I knew, people were messing about in PDRacers in over 25 foreign countries and most of the states in the good ol' USA and at least 538 of these little racing scows had been registered at http://pdracer.com It's time for *MAIB* to start marketing to this movement! There's a fan base ripe for the picking.

"Cheap, creative, and fun on the water," is the motto of this developmental racing class, and the PDRacer exemplifies its motto. The PuddleDuckRacer was the brainchild of David "Shorty" Routh who conceived the design as an easily-built, flat-sided, 4'x8' racing scow. The class design specifies that all boats must have the lower 10" of their hulls alike, but the rest is up to the imagination of the builder. Sail plans, interiors, decks, boards, cabins, flotation, and water balloon launchers are all optional. Did I mention cabins? Note the PDRacer in the background of one of the photos.

Simplicity Itself

The PDRacer is a great little entry boat for novice sailors and boatbuilders. The first boat is usually built for less than $300 from materials that are readily available from most lumberyards. Total construction time is often just a weekend or two for determined builders. By referencing all the information at the home page at http~//pdracer.com or participating in the Puddle Duck forum at http://qroups.yahoo.com/group/PuddleDuck/ or by accessing the Sail Oklahoma forum, site of the 2011 World Championship, at hftp://qroups.yahoo.com/group/SailOklahoma/, newbies soon learn tips and tricks for everything from the holding power of PL Premium to the cut of polytarp sails. And very soon, they are ready for the build of their Puddle Duck #2 and a shot at becoming a Texas 200 Legend, a world record holder, or the next PDR World Champ!

Cheap

Most PDRacers are built from as little as two sheets of 1/4" plywood, a few sticks of framing, a polytarp sailmaking kit, waterproof glue, a few screws, and some latex house paint. Some early PDRacer hulls were built for about $100. Most builders now spend about $300 to build their boats. The cost of plans ranges from free at the PDRacer.com website up to $30 by designers who sell plans on Duckworks. High performing sails are invariably made from low cost polytarp sail kits offered by PolySail International at hftp~//polysail.com/pdracerproducts.htm.

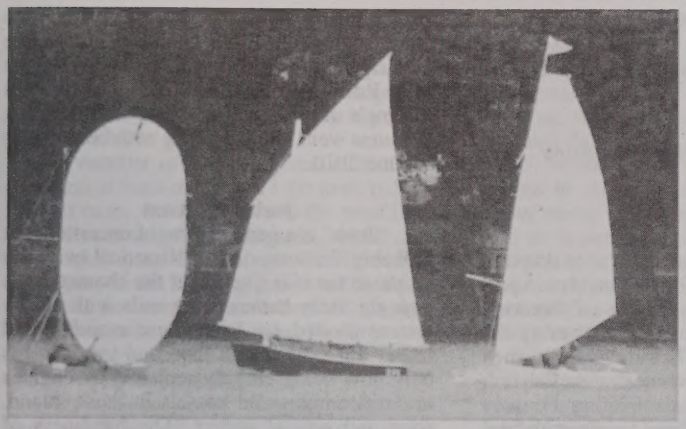
Most of the boats in this class fly polytarp sails, and builders who fly high cost sails from professional sailmakers risk being tarred and feathered and ridden out of the primitive camping area on a splintery 2" x 4" mast.

Creative

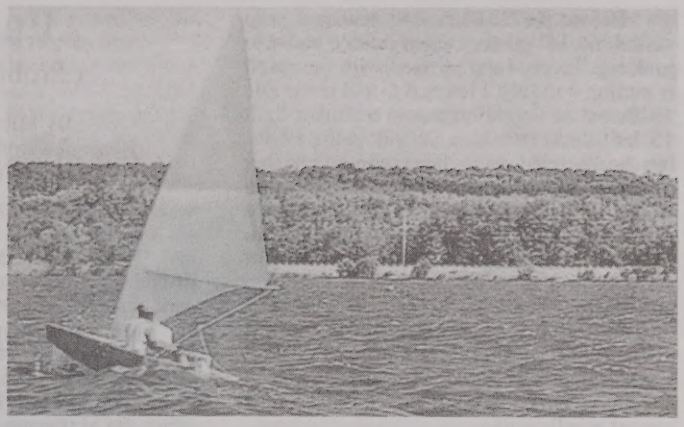
The "Practically anything goes above 10" rule" allows for some very creative hulls and sails. Just check out some of the sail plans in the photo from the 2009 World Championship held at Allatoona Lake in Georgia.

Few PDRacers are entirely alike, and now a few well-known designers of homebuilt boats such as Jim Michalak and John Welsford have begun to offer their own plans. Builders are rarely satisfied with just one boat and specialty designs have been built for racing, cruising and record-setting. Examples: Kenny Giles set an American speed record at a 2007 messabout at Rend Lake, IL. PolySail founder Dave Gray is attempting to set a record for the most sail carried at 164sf on 3 masts.

Dave Gray's 3-master flying 164sf of sail.



Sail plan anyone?



Windsurfer wannabee.

PDRacers have amazed many builders with their seaworthiness and participate annually in the Texas 200-a 200 mile sail along the isolated south Texas coast. Built-in flotation is a requirement for safety, and with a 600lbs+ displacement at the waterline, a PDRacer can hold a really hefty crew of 2 or several members of the family, including pets.

Fun On (and Off) the Water

Regional fleets typically gather to race as part of a "messabout" that is part camping, part racing, and all good fellowship. For the last two years PolySail International has produced a calendar listing many of these events. Funds raised from the sale of calendars go to support both http://PDRacer.com where the rules and membership are listed, and the Sail Oklahoma website. After the success of last year's regional messabout this year's World Championship will take place on Saturday, October 8, at Lake Eufaula, Oklahoma.

A minimum of 30 PDRacers is expected to line up to compete for the title. However, the real draw is not the race, as most experienced "duckers" know, it's the fellowship and the food. Hosts Mike and Jackie Monies take southern hospitality and cooking to the extreme, and the meals are delicious and massive! I believe some people build PDRacers just so they can qualify to eat cowboy cookies!

Readers (and editors), if you are truly afficionados of messing about in boats, it's time to go build a Puddle Duck and experience what messing abut is all about.

8' Open Class & PDRS

For the MASCF

By Greg Grundtisch

The 2011 Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival will be held September 30 to October 2. As we have in the past couple years, we are trying to promote and expand the participation of smaller boats for an "open class" of 8-footers, a regatta of sorts in the protected cove at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. This open class includes Puddle Duck Racers, Mouse boats, or any boat that is 8' or less. The sail(s) can be of any size and type. This has been a growing event at the festival, and this year looks to be the best yet, as the word is finally getting around about how much fun this "regatta" is. There are trophies and prizes for the winners, too.

As in the last couple years, there will be PDR(s) being built on site, and one can learn how, or help, to build a PDR. For a boat to be an "approved PDR" and receive an official PDR number, some strict size and design guidelines must be followed. But PDRs are the quickest and easiest of boats to build. They are essentially Bolger Bricks, 4' beam by 8' LOD. The plans, (and there are many), can be had for free on the Internet. There are several websites that have step-by-step photos, (some with video), and directions on building this type of vessel. There are also online forums that share building tips and ideas. This boat is so simple that it can be built in less than a weekend by anyone.

The strict building rules apply only to the basic hull size and shape. The rest is up to the builder's creativity, choice of a full keel. centerboard, leeboard, bilge keels, etc. is OK. The sail configuration is also up to the builder. Lateen and lugsails are the most common, but any type and size chosen is acceptable, and there are many. The one I'm

currently building will have a mainsail, a jib on a bowsprit, and a mizzen. I am also considering a topsail.

PDRs are just one of many (any), designs of 8' boats that can enter the regatta in an open class. Bring what you have, or begin building one now for the MASCF this Fall in St Michaels, Maryland. Or just come along for the fun, maybe look on and see one being built, lend a hand, help out with organizing the race, or just be there in vocal support as the regatta goes on. My boats will be available for use by anyone who wants to go for a sail or row.

The MASCF has many other events and workshops, as well as other races for other boat designs, such as canoes, paddle, row and sail. There are also some events for kids, a guest speaker on Saturday evening, and the dinner and awards are good food and fun. Oh yeah, there is lots of opportunity to mess about in boats. Free camping, too! It is simply a lot of fun with or without a boat. Make plans now to attend; I guarantee you will have a great time.

To get more information about the Festival and the Museum just google cbmm.org. For information on building a PDR, google pdracer.com, or just google puddle duck racer. You will find plenty of photos and building sites, as well as information about other PDR regional groups and gatherings. See you in St Michaels!

Eureka!

A Problem Solved

By Michael Rogers
Reprinted from *Dinghy Cruising* Bulletin #210

Before the 2010 sailing season I converted my 14' gunter rigged double ender to junk rig. To say I am pleased with the result is putting it mildly. I learned to sail in the late 1940s out of Brightlingsea, in a clinker-built 15' half-decker. Built in Suffolk in the 1930s, her beam must have been about half her length and she had lots of pig iron stowed in the bilges. She was gaff rigged and had a roller reefing mainsail. My views have probably been shaped by this early experience of stability in a time before GRP and modern performance boats.

In 2003 I discovered www.swallowboats.com and started building one of their kit boats early in 2004. Her official launch was into Coniston Water, March 2005, on an almost windless day.

Cadenza is a Storm Petrel. She is made of ply epoxy with hardwood sheer strakes and coamings. Her life began with the clever and effective gunter rig that is used successfully, with variations, on most of the Swallowboats range. The main features are a short, raked and unstayed rotating mast with a very long gunter gaff and a horizontal sprit boom from about a foot above the tack of the mainsail to the clew. The sail itself is loose footed. There is a small self tacking foresail on a club boom.

Cadenza has a lovely sheer with a high prow, her designer claims some Nordic inspiration, together with relatively low freeboard amidships and a neat canoe stern. She is, in a word, beautiful and I love her to bits. She has lots of buoyancy fore and aft that makes her unsinkable. However, I believe she should not be considered for cruising. She is very tender and would spectacularly fail a stability test that involved my sitting on the gunwale. Although I sometimes have company, most of my sailing is single handed so I have been using water ballast in plastic camping containers either side of the daggerboard case. This is reasonably effective.

Reefing and Stability

The impetus for the change of rig came from my frustration with *Cadenza's* arrangements for reefing, which illustrate what I call the Reefing Paradox that is evident on many small boats; the more important it is to be able to reef on the water, the more difficult it is to achieve this quickly and safely.

The first reduction of sail was to drop the jib and sail under main only. This involved a precarious stretch past the mast across a 4' foredeck.

The second stage involved lowering the 10' long gaff into the 7' long cockpit, then changing the point of attachment of the halyard, re-hoisting the gaff, and slab reefing the main using one of two rows of reef points, with final adjustments to the clew outhaul at the outer end of a boom thrashing to and fro in the freshening wind. In *Cadenza,* at least, this sort of palaver was clearly out of the question on the water, so reefing was a matter of "run for the shore and do it there." Shaking out reefs when the wind dropped was equally unhandy.

But what if there were no safe shore or conditions deteriorated too quickly to reach it? The choice lay between sailing ultra defensively, don't go out if it might come on to blow, or reef first just in case, or being prepared to take unseamanlike risks. I needed to achieve a practicable on the water reefing capability.

In July 2009 I had my "eureka moment" very late one evening in the snug main saloon of *Trinovante*, a three masted, gaff rigged schooner that sails out of Ipswich, during a cruise down the Norwegian coast from Trondheim (www.schoonersail.com). There was a copy of Hasler and McCleod's *Practical Junk Rig* on the library shelf. But could junk rig be scaled down to suit my little boat? I didn't know but I became determined to find out.

Back in Blighty, a quick Google led me to try a phone number from the old JRA website, via which the courteous voice of Robin Blain offered valuable advice and lots of encouragement. There followed more reading and sketching, my joining the JRA, attendance at the 2009 JRA rally at Kippford, emails and phone discussions with Robin, and contact with Christopher Scanes, a sail maker in Topsham who has expertise in modern junk rig sails.

Detailed planning was delayed by a house move until early spring 2010. The new rig was designed with generous advice from Robin and Chris. I also found Sunbird Marine's *Junk Rig Handbook* very helpful. *Cadenza* went into the water with her new rig in June 2010.

Joshua Slocum

"Junk" is a generic term of uncertain, but probably Western, origin. Historical evidence is sparse but it is likely that the characteristic junk rig, fully battened lug sails with all the battens sheeted, has been in use in and around China for more than a thousand years and is only now being entirely replaced by engines in small commercial vessels in those inland, river and coastal waters. The handiness of sailing junks in crowded seaways has been commented upon by many western observers with sailing knowledge, and it is known that extremely large junks, with five and even more masts and huge sails, made successful voyages all around the Indian Ocean and perhaps further afield in the 15th century.

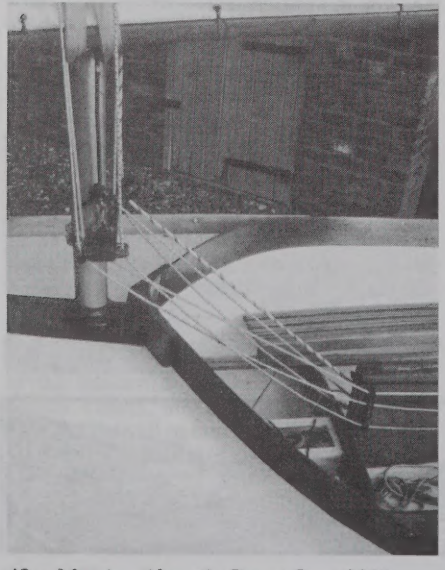
In the 19th century Joshua Slocum chose junk rig for a boat he built himself to take his family back to the US after shipwreck off South America. After the successful voyage he commented that the rig was superior for long passage making to any other rig in his experience, which of course was vast.

Blondie Hasler, of *Jester* fame, seems to have been the first person to take seriously the challenge of adapting junk rig to western recreational sailing. His exploits in the 1960s and '70s are well known and inspired a small but growing number of serious sailors to use the rig. Many trans oceanic voyages and even some circumnavigations followed. *Practical Junk Rig* was published in 1988 and contained the authors' accumulated experience of junk rig. It is well written and readable, has copious illustrations, and the cross referencing and index are especially good. However, it is now partly out of date and does not cover recent developments, some of which are mentioned but not elucidated in an appendix to the most recent edition.

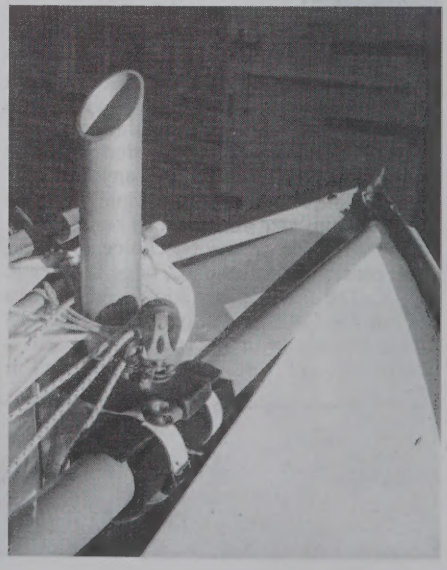
The following are some characteristics of junk rig:

The mast is unstayed and does not rotate. It should be plumb or can be raked forward.

Arrangement of lines around base of mast on *Cadenza*.



Mast "stump" and sleeve with 45° angle.



The sail is fully battened, roughly of lug shape, with all the battens sheeted, except quite commonly the top one as well as the boom. This provides a considerable degree of control of the leech, which does not sag away to leeward as in gaff rig.

A number of running lines, called parrels, pass at least once round the mast before, in most cases, leading down to the mast foot.

The running lines (halyards, parrels, and lazy jacks) pass aft, through blocks and/or bullseyes, to the steering position. This feature does not seem to have been of Chinese origin but to have arisen from Hasler's concern to minimise open deck work in the interests of safety and comfort.

The battens hold the sail constantly stretched from luff to leech. There is therefore no thrashing or flogging when head to wind with a slack sheet. Instead, the sail weathercocks quietly, even in a gale, swinging quite gently from side to side. This lack of sail noise is, when first experienced, a deafening silence.

Without standing rigging and because of the way the sail is set, stresses on both the hull and the rig are low and widely distributed, which produces sea kindly and sailor kindly characteristics that are difficult to describe. Junk rig sailing is low on hassle! This also accounts for the rule of thumb that 10% should be added to the former sail area when converting from a previous rig.

Reefing is achieved by dropping the lowest batten onto the boom or sail bundle below it. The sail panels between the battens fold up rather like a blind. Progressively the sail bundle gets larger as the sail becomes smaller. There is a more detailed description below.

Hasler rig junk sails are, like their Chinese antecedents, essentially flat. Two recent developments attempt to improve the aerofoil effect of the sail in order to increase its efficiency.

Jointed battens have been used, requiring the use also of flexible keep battens, made of something like plastic tubing, on the reverse (port) side of the sail to smooth out angularities.

Sailmakers in Norway and Chris Scanes in this country (UK) now make sails which give each sail panel its own camber between straight battens, the so-called cambered panel sail.

If not absolutely the smallest junk around, *Cadenza* must be close to it. Junk rigs in the UK have so far been used almost entirely on yachts of about 20' to upwards of 50', the larger ones often being schooner rigged. John and Sue Shores were tolerantly unamused by my suggestion that *Trinovante* would make a wonderful three masted junk.

The changes I had to make to the hull itself turned out to be minor. The position of the mast remains the same, but a new mast step was needed so that the mast itself is plumb. I also needed a triple standup block for the sheet, mounted just forward of the sternpost at the apex of the canoe stern.

The new bespoke aluminum mast came from Sunbird Marine. It has a joint 3' up from the foot, where a sleeve in the upper section fits into the lower stump. The joint is angled at 45°, which makes it impossible for the two pieces to rotate relative to each other. The lower stump is through bolted in the mast step and so is permanently stepped. Non rotation and accurate alignment are taken care of and only the upper, much longer, part is unstepped for trailering, etc. In practice this works beautifully but the mast's weight makes it difficult to balance the upper part exactly vertically at arm's length, then slide the sleeve on the bottom of the upper mast down into the stump while standing beside the boat on its trailer. *Cadenza* is too tippy to step the upper mast while afloat. I've tried it!

An additional advantage of the fixed bottom mast section is that most of the parrels remain looped round the stump when the sail is lowered, minimizing the amount of un-reeving and re-reeving running lines when making and furling sail. The yard is made up from laminated stripwood, and the boom was fashioned from the sprit boom of the previous rig.

Chris Scanes made me one of his cambered panel sails. At 68sf it is his smallest to date. There are four battens made from ¾" anodized aluminum tubing. A larger junk sail would have many more than that. The anodizing costs a lot! After experimenting, the top batten has been left unsheeted. The control of the whole leech by the sheet is somehow very satisfying.

All the running lines, including the halyard (but not the sheet) pass through blocks or bullseyes mounted on a fife rail near the foot of the mast. This is high enough to carry the lines down over the coaming to further bullseyes on the forward edges of the daggerboard case sides and from there to camcleats on either side of the after end of the case. They are readily to hand while sailing. The fife rail is a chunk of mahogany about 9" long, shaped to half the mast's diameter and held in place athwartships by two heavy duty stainless hose clips.

On a larger boat with, say 300sf of sail, the sail bundle comprising the yard, boom, all the intervening battens, and the sail is quite heavy and must be made manageable by giving the halyard and lazyjacks considerable mechanical advantage with blocks. With *Cadenza's* small sail and few battens, the bundle is actually light and easily lifted, and a two part halyard and simple lazyjacks are more than adequate.

Of course, some tweaking of the rig was needed for the sail to set perfectly. However, from her very first outing it was clear that *Cadenza* loves her new rig. She points as high as ever she did, and goes about with unfailing confidence. Off the wind, she simply flies, and I wish double enders could plane!

The only relative disappointment so far has been sailing in light winds. I am not sure what I was expecting, as I already knew this was not something at which a junk rig excels. I thought, perhaps mistakenly, that cambered panel sails would perform better in this respect. Robin Blain has suggested that a lighter sailcloth might have helped the small panels to fill with wind more efficiently in lighter airs.

A lighter mast is needed. Plain carbon fiber tube can easily be made up with a similar angled join and the weight reduction to about 3.5kg from the current 12kg would greatly ease mast stepping. I am told that the characteristics of CF tube make it particularly suitable for use as an unstayed mast in a low stress rig.

But what about reefing, which was the original object of the exercise? The answer is that it is ridiculously easy and absurdly quick. What have western rigs been doing these past centuries? It is much quicker to reef a junk sail than to describe how it is done and the description makes it seem far more elaborate than it is. With practice it takes about 20 seconds. Easiest when head to wind, it is perfectly feasible close hauled, and at a pinch further off the wind than that. Remember, all lines are to hand at the helming position and all adjustments of the lines through their camcleats are made from there.

1) Make sure the lazyjacks are taking the weight of the boom.

2) Ease the halyard so that the relevant batten drops onto the boom or batten below, taking a panel of the sail with it, and ease the yard parrel.

3) Tension the batten downhaul (without going into technicalities, each batten has a downhaul arrangement).

4) Tighten the luff by re-tensioning the halyard.

5) Adjust the lazyjacks if necessary so that the sail bundle is parallel with the reefed batten.

6) Readjust the yard parrel to optimise the set of the reefed sail.

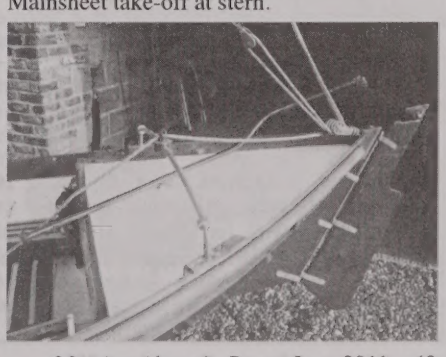
Stages 5 and 6 can easily be postponed until the boat is underway again. Shaking out a reef is just as quick and easy. It is truly as fast and simple as that.

The rig change has been almost an unqualified success. Junk rigs scale down quite beautifully to small boat size, offering dinghy sailors all its advantages in terms of placid, not dull, handling, performance, and ease of reefing. As with larger boats, the benefits should be especially useful when cruising. In my own sailing experience there is very little other rigs can do which is not done better by this small junk rig. In terms of reefing the difference is spectacular, so I have found a practical and elegant solution to the Reefing Paradox which should work for any small boat, however skittish.

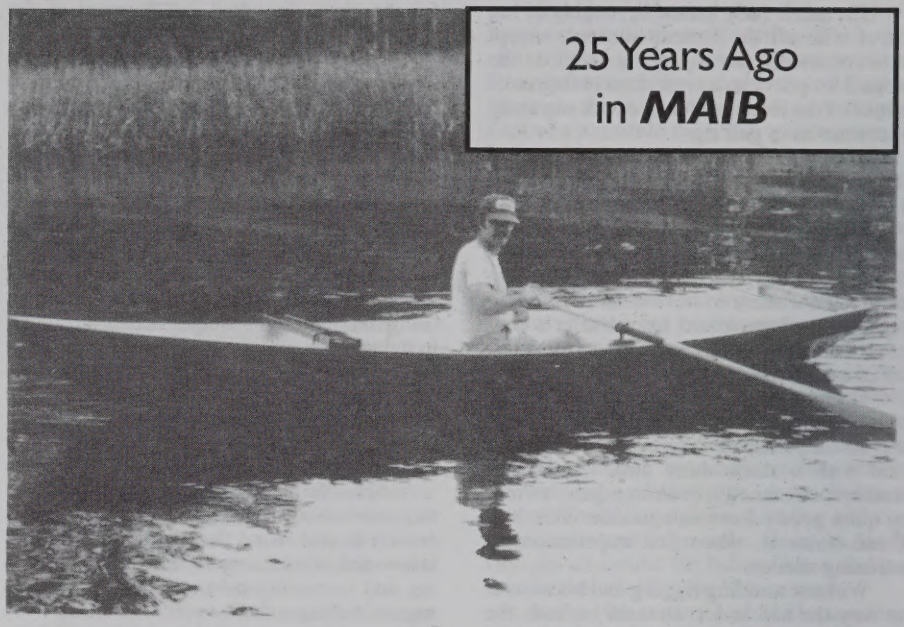
Sorting *Cadenza's* problems out has made me realize that her underlying personality cannot be changed. I am also aware that my agility will eventually diminish in the reasonably near future. In particular, *Cadenza* will not serve as my dotage boat, in which to sail into the sunset in years to come, in other words to provide safe and relatively undemanding dinghy cruising. I am therefore about to embark on a second kit build of a more suitable dinghy for that purpose, which should be great fun. She will be small, light, beamy, and stable.

Detail of fittings on mast.

Mainsheet take-off at stern.



25 Years Ago in ***MAIB***



An Amateur Builds Bolger's GYPSY

Small boats capture that remnant of adventure left in us domesticated folks who experience adventures vicariously through TV, books or movies, but still thirst for the first-hand knowledge of doing it ourselves. Reason prevails in our choice of conveyance whether it be the family station wagon or combination fishing/rowing/sailing boat, but at heart we think like A.A. Milne in his poem, "Spring Morning":

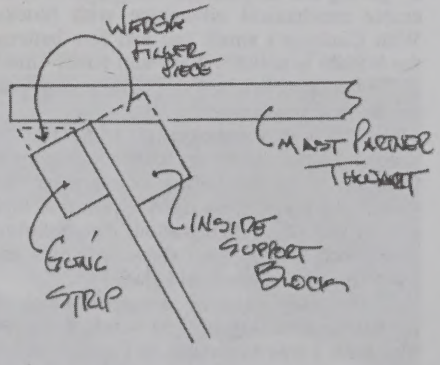
If you were a bird and lived on high,
You'd lean on the wind when the wind came by,
You'd say to the wind when it took you away:
"That's where I wanted to go today!"

Off in search of adventure, or more pragmatically, perhaps, in search of a picturesque and secluded launch ramp. After all, Captain John Smith's ship's boat that he used to explore the James River in the 1630's was only fifteen feet long, so why couldn't we do something exciting with our modern versions of the same length? These things, I maintain, are more behind our choice of small boat rather than practical matters like number of seats, displacement or draft. of course, it does not hurt if the boat looks well too. Phil Bolger designs boats that are easy on the eye and sit gracefully upon the water in addition to being practical. His "Gypsy" is such a craft, accomplishing rowing, sailing and motoring equally well. She is also capable of adventurous expeditions, as demonstrated by John Garber's odyssey along the Maine coast.

Suffice it to say, I chose "Gypsy" to build, nights and weekends in the garage, with home shop tools using "stitch and glue" technology, with H.H. (Dynamite) Payson's instructions in hand (the patron Saint of homebuilt plywood boats). What now follows are experiences which may be of some interest to those with similar bent.

Hull plans are available from Mr. Payson and were shown in the SMALL BOAT JOURNAL. The building directions which come with the plans are beautifully described in Mr. Payson's latest book and were covered in great detail for the pure outboard version, "Diablo", in a WOODEN BOAT magazine article. My comments address none of the information contained in the above references, only some observations from the viewpoint of the rank amateur. Of course, I could not resist slipping in a few changes as I went along. I added plywood seats fore and aft for other family members and for flotation. The one aft is sealed airtight; the one forward is full of styrofoam. This in lieu of the styrofoam under the main thwart and benches shown in the plans. I used plywood for bow and stern seats because plywood sure cuts easily for odd shapes.

The mast partner, a 3/4"x6" board, as shown on the plans, goes all the way across to the outside of the gunwale strip. The gunwale tilts away and down, however. A little wedge fills in this space and allows better bearing for nailing. I suggest support blocks on the inside of the top plank under the partner board as well to give a larger bearing/nailing surface. This also allows installation of the mast partner before the gunwales are installed (last item after fiberglassing). A bonus is that the waste strip cut off the top of the support block to make it level is exactly the wedge to fill in between gunwale and partner board (see illustration).



A neat detail to include throughout the interior is a fillet. The Gougeon Brothers explain it in their book, it is a mixture of microbal loons and epoxy spread into the interior corners with tongue depressor to make the joints both stronger and easier to clean when the boat is in use. Microfibers and epoxy make a stronger mixture for the centerboard and mast step areas, although its surface texture is rougher. Application requires a knack. The radius of the 1/4 circle fillet depends on the angle at which the tongue depressor is held. Excess goop that squeezes out above and below the tongue depressor is scraped off and returned to the glue pot.

Another fine touch that adds to appearance is to 1/4 round corners with a router wherever edges are exposed. Some pieces have to be so edged before installation, due to tight spaces blocking router head movement later.

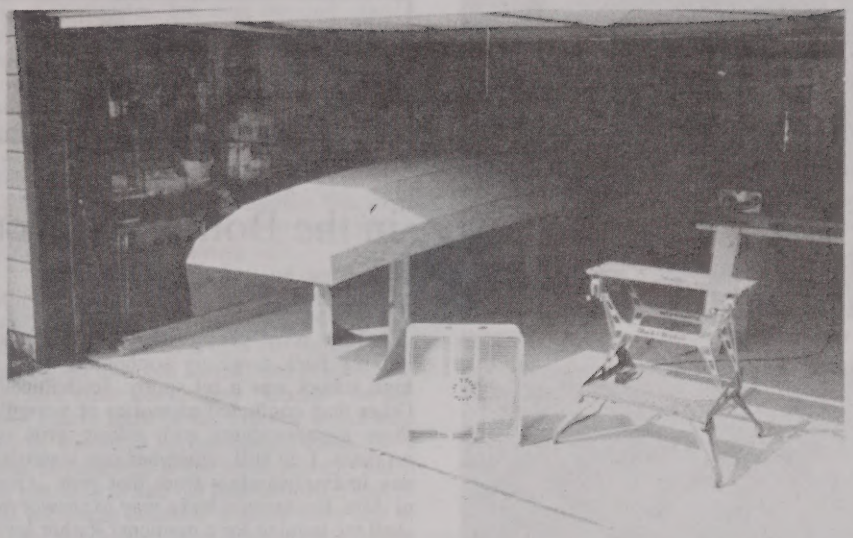
Foam rollers are best for applying epoxy to flat surfaces; they will go twice as far if you cut them in half. We used Gougeon Brothers West System (TM) epoxy throughout for adhesive, with microballoons and glass fibers for filler, clear epoxy all over as sealer against both water and water vapor, as well as the epoxy for the fiberglass cloth.

The surfaces of epoxy that are to be painted or varnished must be washed off first with soap and water to remove a wax residue. Failure to do this will result in paint not sticking and varnish becoming spotty about a year later, and then only refinishing from bare wood will help.

For the inside tape strips, we rolled on the epoxy first and, yes, foam rollers save epoxy and are a lot faster; if you cut the rollers in half, they work better in tight places. Anyway, roll on a prime coat inside just before you start taping and if you have slow hardening epoxy (1/2 hour at 70 degrees) the primer will be just sticky enough to hold your tape up in place while

you work your way along the seam with the cover coat. This saves that "extra hand" Dynamite required on Diablo for this evolution. My wife, you see, was on vacation and all the neighbors did when they stopped by was to talk about an "Ark" in the neighborhood.

The Gougeon Brothers in their book, "The Gougeon Brothers on Boat Construction", Pendell Printing, Inc., Midland, MI (pages 75-78) show a neat way to cut scarfs in the ends of plywood panels by stacking them in a staggered fashion, ends two inches apart, then cutting with an electric plane or, in my case, with a coarse belt sander. I held the plywood in place by nailing it to 16' 1"x2" strips laid on the garage floor. After sanding the scarf, I just pulled the panels up, flipped them around so the scarfed faces matched and glued the sloped faces together. Remember to brush on one coat of clear epoxy first, which soaks in, before gooping on a thick coat of epoxy with a few microballoons (for filler) which will act as the actual glue. I put a 1"x2" right under the joint and nailed right through the plywood and 1"x2"'s with smooth brads . Remember to put a layer of polyethylene under the plywood, between the layers of plywood and under the top 1"x2" nailer. My scarfs do not match the Gougeon Brothers' for mirror finish but to my eye, at least, they look better



than a big old butt block on the inside of the planks that the plans call for; they also make cleanup easier after a sandy day of beach cruising.

Extra materials used in constructing the hull (not listed in the plans) were these:

Mahogany: 2"x4"x4' to thicken transom for motor mounting; 2"x6"x8' for center thwart, mast partner thwart and 1.5" support pieces on the mast partner; 6"x4"x3/4" (2) for blocks to raise oarlocks 1"; 1"x4"x6' for tiller and hiking stick..

Straight Grain Fir: 1"x4"x16' for gunwales.

Tools I required in this construction were these:

Skil 492 saber saw; variable speed 1/4" electric drill; Makita palm sander; 7.25" Skil circular saw; table saw for resawing and squaring.

Report, photos & illustrations from Bill Rutherford

(Next issue Bill Rutherford discusses his experiences with the centerboard case construction, rudder, spars and overall hints on the whole building process).

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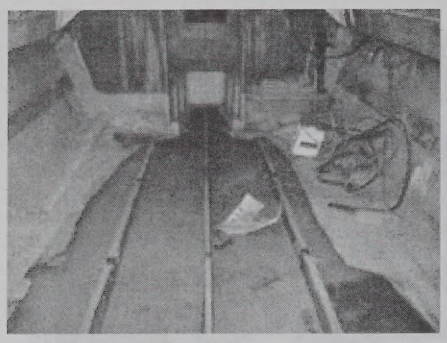
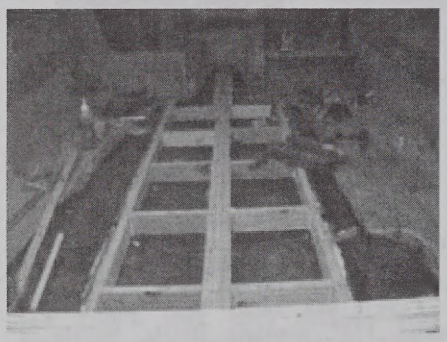
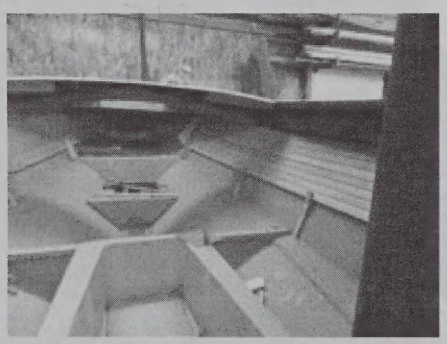
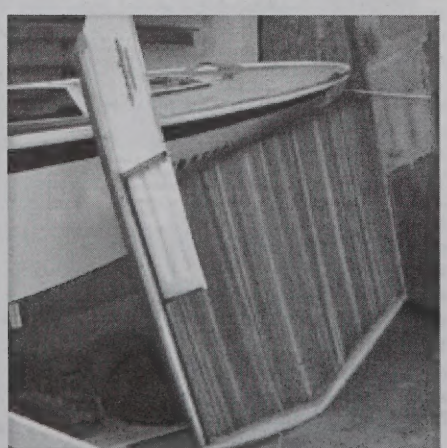








Boats Really Don't Make Sense

"The Stopper in the Bottle" Project

By Dan Rogers

Like most people of a "certain age," looking back now, my sophomore year in high school was a bit spotty, academically. Other than conflicted memories of a couple-three misadventures with asking girls out on dates, I do still remember one watershed day in English class from that year. Good ol' Mrs. Bochmeyer had a way to answer me, shall we indulge for a moment? Rather sophomoric questions. Anyway.

The first answer: "Well, Dan, some phrases will be trite and hackneyed the FIRST time they are uttered." And, there's a cherished follow-on from that same exchange. "If you don't know how to spell a word; use another one." Granted, that was on the antediluvian side of Spell Check, and certainly pre-dated the "BTW RU L8?" crowd by eons. But, words to live by, nonetheless. And, this has what to do with the subject? Lots, actually.

By dint of undiagnosed Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, I have managed over the past 60 days to transform a gutted and languishing 53-year-old powerboat hull into a thing of near-beauty. She will, perhaps, even float again. Soon. She could probably be better named *Getterdone! Shortcut* would do as well. However, in honor of a prior OCD/ADHD-driven event now buried in my past, she will bear the moniker, *Old Salt II*. The original *Old Salt* was a long-retired 40' USCG steel hulled patrol boat that I managed to bring back to life along with a complete infrastructure for teaching navy sailors how to handle ships and related arcana. Another story, some other day.

Here's the deal. *Old Salt II* was supposed to become a mini-tug, suitable for towing a "bunkhouse" barge up the Inland Waterway amid the mists and RAIN of British Columbia and Alaska. She was supposed to be as cute and adorable as my friend, Gary Cull's adorable *Snail Mail*, a Can Du Easy design inspired by a now-passing era. She was supposed to resemble Jay Benford's mini tug designs. She was supposed to be modeled on the Glen-L coastal cruiser design and even the 26' Nordic Tugs. But, I chickened out. After over 30 years of contemplating this project in all its vicissitudes, I simply choked. And, there the *Old Salt* "project" languished. This brings me to that need to avoid the trite and hackneyed.

Old Salt II had become the "stopper in the bottle."A bottle that figuratively contained an array of gunnado's and wannado's. You see, I had this hull. Actually, I now have a total of THREE hulls that don't perform any useful work other than holding boat trailers down to the parking places assigned. But, the one in question had been hauled into my newly completed shop about 9 months before. The idea had been, originally, to "simply" restore a 1959-vintage Glasspar Seafair Sedan Cruiser to some of her former glory. And, that in and of itself is a rather daunting task. But.

But, by the time I had removed every piece of rotted wood from the hull, and every piece of moulded fiberglass that would unbolt, or allow itself to be ripped out; this vision of a mini-tug or mini-trawler yacht had become firmly superimposed. I even hoisted the former coachroof into place as a pilot house top, and did the lath-and-clamp mockup of a complete cabin outline (for the drafting-impaired).

She has the proper level of perkiness to her sheer, a rather full bow section, and ample freeboard to fit in with the study plans and photos I taped to the hull. I also taped 'em on the shop wall, in the office over the computer screen, and even downloaded a passle of 'em to help stoke the visual effect. I could actually FEEL her roll with a gentle swell, as the drizzle ran in rivulets down her (imaginary) pilot house windows. The putative Diesel fireplace warmed the spot my favorite coffee cup would sit, next to the chart table. Amid the dividers and parallel rulers and pencils and other now passé effluviam of my navigational past. Of course, this was all "done" at about 6-8 knots while a near-silent 4-stroke outboard did its work in an enclosed well. Down aft, someplace. And, of course, mounted slightly AHEAD of the transom, to put the helix across a proper inboard rudder. And, so the reverie would go. Until.

Until, it came down to actually picturing how I was supposed to make all those joints and angles and bevels and complementary curves. Like many of us, I have literally shelves of books on boat building, and design. Crates of old magazines and yellowing brochures. There are dozens of boats out there someplace that I took apart, rebuilt, modified, and loved once and don't have any more. Lots and lots of background on the subject. But, damn it! It was January, and summer just had to be close aboard. In addition to being everything I had imagined her to be over the past 30 or more years, *Old Salt II* was supposed to be operational by spring thaw. I drove myself (more) crazy, trying to consolidate the entire project into something that would bear more than imaginary fruit. What's more, there are all those other boats lined up behind her for overhaul. What to do?

I hung pictures of the "tug" version next to pictures (other peoples' boats) of the stock version. Every now and again, after hours of "settling" the question; I would take the "wrong" pictures down. And, then planning would resume in earnest. Until. Until that cagy old whatiffff bird would settle on my shoulder and get the process of "deciding"started up all over again. I'm sure now, that I was trying to rewrite that basic law of physics that says, "All boats are compromises." Not MY boat. My boat was gonna have everything I ever wanted in a boat. She was gonna be seaworthy, and beautiful, and creative, and unique, and

Finally, the day dawned. 20 January 2011, to be precise. It's now the week after April Fools Day. But, back in January, I finally decided that if I was ever gonna get this particular stopper out of this particularly psychotic bottle, it was time to fish or cut bait. Actually, it was time to either put her back together The Way God Intended. Or.

Or, it was time to cut up the deck and cabin remnants irretrievably. No more time to wallow in indecision. I think that was the day I had quite boldly settled on the tug design,

and was finally going to start creating the round house that was supposed to blend into the pilot house that was supposed to flow into the lowered aft cabin. I really think I actually knew what I was going to be doing. I got out the sawzall. I drew the arc on the deck just like those I had simulated with clamps and splines about a hundred times before. I plugged in the sawzall, and climbed up on the foredeck. Ready to do the deed.

Yep. You guessed it. I climbed back down, off the foredeck. I took the tug and trawler pictures off the wall. And, started to bring the old Glasspar back to her original configuration. Well, sort of. I actually changed everything, but the basic hull shape.

I think she has put on around 500 additional pounds in the Hell-for-Stout department. When I started the original cancer surgery, her floor was a crumbling layer of 3/8" plywood sort of attached to three fore and aft fir (?) 1"x4" stringers. The stringers were sort of tabbed to the hull with glass scraps and globs of ancient polyester resin. Of course, the transom was riddled with holes and rot. When that once-proud piece of 1 1/2 "marine (?) plywood had been chiseled, twisted, and vacuumed out; all that remained was about 1/8 " of fiberglass.

I replaced the stringers with a complex ladder frame assembly made from 1 1/8" plywood cut up into "lumber." The replacement floor is 1/2" plywood, and has a second decorative overlayment of laminated spruce and bamboo strips that (I hate to admit it to real boatbuilders) retained its as-milled 1/2" thickness as well. Of course, the transom was bulked up to 2 1/2" before the 3/16" full-width aluminum plates went on both sides. Where a few self-tapping screws and half-century-old silicone once supposedly held things together and water out, there is now epoxy, glass, plywood doublers, and decorative planking courtesy of a small forest of cedar, spruce, bamboo, fir, pine, and tigerwood trees. Yep. Hell-for-Stout.

I'm told that women remember years and/or seasons and events by what ever boyfriend or husband they had at the time. I know for a fact, most men recall their past by what car they were driving at the time. Say the words, "Kennedy, Dallas" to a guy and he'll invariably get a picture of a '64 Impala before the required image of the Book Depository finally comes on his mental screen. Well, you may have your own examples. I'm told that Ford and Chrysler were making cars during those years. I don't think anybody bought 'em though. Anyhow.

To describe this project better, I'll try the car metaphor. Basically, what I have done, now that the tugboat drawings are relegated to the back of the drawer, is to take a '61 Chevy and turn it back into a '56 Mercury. Not unlike taking a Swedish Modern table and making it look like a Mediterranean style table. Sort of.

What was driving this is a dislike for wobbly boats, and a greater dislike for leaking cabin windows. Also, what was REALLY driving this whole thing is a life-long affection for genuine wooden boats combined with an above average level of impatience with building things from scratch. And, a morbid aversion to doing just about anything the way anybody else would do it. You know, like actually following a set of somebody else's building plans.

Sometimes this approach can be just downright satisfying. Sometimes, nothing less than disaster. So, over the past couple months of 12-hour days, regularly interrupted by sessions out on the snowplow, of course, there has come a complete set of both satisfactions and disasters. But, she's only about a measley week or so from a float test. I went out and bought this huge (huge, for a lifelong ragbagger) V-4 Johnson. I call him, Big Bad John, in honor of another '50s icon: Tennessee Ernie Ford. Big John came with a control unit, but no steering unit.

Anybody who's taken on an endless project like this, knows why it's endless. The local emporium of lumber, hardware, and other big city delights got me started on a concoction of tinted shellac and exterior UV inhibitor (that doesn't say "marine" on the can). I have most of the exterior wood with one of the three recommended coats on. I went in yesterday to get some more to finish the job, only to find out that the ONLY can of this particular Minwax witches brew left in the entire system now resides in a warehouse someplace in Illinois. The Minwax gods promised that I could have it. We'll see how that works out with the Pony Express rider.

I got the cabin windows cut out of a sheet of 1/4" Plexiglas tonight. I think the radii are about right, and I think the bevels are about right. Then, flushed with a sense of accomplishment in the face of adversity, I went ahead and mocked up a windscreen for the helm station. I know, there was supposed to be a simple replacement of cracked original safety glass panels, and a simple re-assembly of the original assembly. Simple. Sure.

Ever hear of compulsive behavior? As I got out the bucket of parts from under my glue-up table, dusted off the custom cast parts and old windows stacked there carefully to serve as patterns, it dawned on me that maybe, just maybe, I had a "better" idea floating around in my head. Perhaps you know somebody like that?

I think what I "settled" on was more like a 1930-something English roadster windshield than what the long-ago Glaspar design team created for the boat. So, to continue with the car analogy, I'll have to bring Johnny Cash in with his rendition of that other '50s classic: "my '57, '58, '59 automobile." You get the idea.

Anyhow, the TODO list is down to about a half-page, and if I don't get too many more bright ideas, this little stinkpot will have a new lease on afloat life about the time our local water gets above 32 degrees. Most any day now.

In the beginning, when just about anything was possible...

And, for a while, it was "simple." Just fix the broken stuff...

For a while, things went according to "plan"

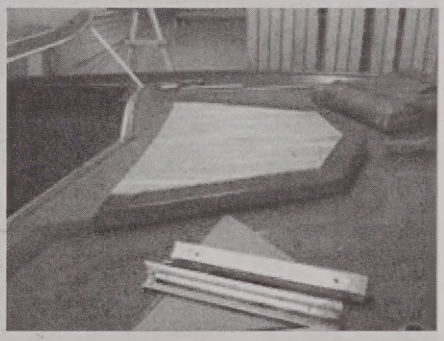
Then, the "bright" ideas start to appear. I think maybe it was leprechauns working at night. Stuff just seemed to appear, and change, and then maybe change again.

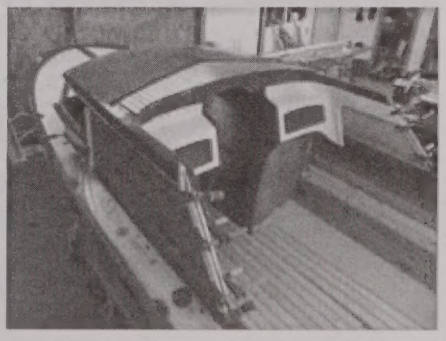
If a little wood trim is good, why not add a whole bunch?

From a peeling paint interior to cedar, and spruce, and even bamboo inlays in the cockpit/cabin sole. This is what was once the cabin top, that sort of went back on with some of the original shape and look, only everything is now a lot different. The adventure continues...

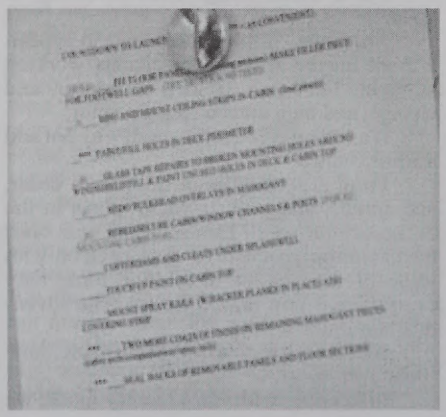
And, if a lot of wood trim is OK, how 'bout even more?

In keeping with '56 Mercury motif, we are becoming rather dapper in a hussy red and cream color scheme. And, of course, the lumber yard keeps migrating into the cockpit The almost-final version of the cabin window profile. Next comes the almost-final windscreen profile, and the almost-final cockpit seating arrangement. Wonder what the leprechauns will be doing tonight?





The New Shop
Up and Running



In Appreciation of My Shaw & Tenney Oars

By Rick Klepfer
Cushing, Maine

It is Spring in Maine and one's thoughts turn to getting some boats in the water. This has been on my mind since Fall, when I realized how much work I had ahead of me to get the big cutter, the dory and the skiff all repaired, painted and varnished in time for good weather. Having so much time ahead of me, or so it seemed, I naturally expanded what I wanted to get done.

Part of the early activity has been getting the oars for the dory in top shape. I think that I purchased these oars from Shaw & Tenney about 15 years ago. My first Shaw & Tenney oars were some straight tips that I bought in the '70s for a sweet Whitehall rowing boat that I had at the time. This was a boat that could not be sullied by second-rate oars, only the best would do. They didn't come cheap and I had a young family then and not much spare cash, but I figured that the best deal would be to buy the best that I could afford and they would be a bargain in the long run. I was not disappointed in the decision to stretch for the high end.

When I sold that boat, I was tempted to keep the oars out of the deal; they were so handsome and functional that I wanted to find a new boat to put under them. But, they really did belong to the Whitehall and they were tricked out with blue chevrons that matched the sheer stripe of the boat and so I reluctantly sold them as an entirety.

I spent all of my boating energy on the cutter for a number of years but, missing a rowing craft, I kept my feelers out for a decent little boat. I saw an ad for, and placed a bid on, a Swampscott dory. I had never seen this boat, but I put such a low bid on it that I felt, whatever happened, I would come out alright. It turned out that I was the successful bidder and when I went to look at the boat, I found it laying half-sunk on a muddy riverbank, with a family of ducks in residence.

Undaunted I set about to make a full restoration. When I got to the point where I was sure that the resurrection of the boat would be successful, I started thinking about oars. There was no question but that they would be Shaw & Tenney, the only thing to decide was what type, length and material. At first I thought that a straight-tip would be most appropriate to a dory, but as I ruminated over the Shaw & Tenney literature, I couldn't help but to keep coming back to the spoon-tips. They were a perfect melding of beauty and function, but would they stand up to the hard use that they would see with me?

I decided that the spoons were the only thing and, before I could change my mind, I called up Shaw & Tenney and ordered a pair of eight-footers with walnut tips. There was a brief concern in my mind about the ability of the walnut tips to stay glued on through the life that I had planned for them, but it did seem that this extra reinforcement would stand me in good stead when I would be poking around in places that would put a lot of strain on the tips. I went ahead.

When they arrived, I immediately set out to complete them in the way I had envisioned. This meant putting on a few more coats of varnish, painting some hull-colored chevrons on the blades, sewing on long (19") leathers and tying on turk's head buttons after slipping on a set of S&T round, bronze oarlocks. This last bit makes sure that the oarlocks never come off the oar and one can instantly switch from rowing to sculling from the stern with no fuss. After this, the only thing to do was to try them out.

The experience of rowing with good oars is a great pleasure and the spoon-tips only enhanced the task. The flexibility of the spoon seems to put a spring in my step, as it were. They seemed to fit well with the restored dory and with them I was capable of pulling her along to great advantage. Over the years I have used them to pole through many narrow, shallow places, to punch through ice while rowing through hard water, to pry the boat off of rocks in tidal falls, and to whack innumerable barnacle-encrusted chunks of ledge while grounding out the dory on uninhabited isles. They have never failed. My grandchildren have tested their abilities as well.

I must confess that when I started out with the spoon-tips, I was a bit wary of their abilities and so I lashed a pair of standard, garden-variety, painted oars in the bottom of boat, just in case. I have never found the need to use these, except when we are rowing double. My wife thinks that we should get another set of spoon-tips so that we can be fitted out in style; who knows? I do find that the spoons work well in sculling, where I put the oarlock into a socket set in the transom. The curve of the blade enters the water at a good angle and the flexibility of the tip aids the process.

Just figuring things out roughly, I would say that I have put over a million strokes on Shaw & Tenney oars. Other than smearing on a bit of lubricating Vaseline on the leathers from time to time, I have done little to maintain them. This year I have decided to strip all the varnish off with a heat gun and revarnish and repaint them. I will probably use the same leathers, but I had to cut the buttons to get them off. Perhaps I will use a colored twine for the new turk's head buttons. I will also probably change the painted chevrons to a different pattern; it is good to have a little variety every few decades.

As I have been stripping varnish, I have been noting how the oars have fared in their working life, other than a few scrapes and dings and a bit of wear at the ends of the leathers, they are in fine shape. The walnut tips are as secure as the day they were made. This to me is the sign of a finely made tool and I am quite certain that I made the right decision all those years ago when I had to stretch to afford them. I expect that with this bit of maintenance, the oars will last as long as I will have the ability to put them to use.

I offer my thanks to all of the fine craftsmen who have made these oars over the years. In our country, where very little manufacturing is done these days and where a handmade product is even rarer, it is wonderful to have such a resource. When I first started acquiring tools, and after a few distasteful experiences with cheap ones, I decided that the only thing would be to get the best that I could find. This way I would have the pleasure of having a fine piece of craftsmanship in my hand and the assurance that the tool would last as long as I wanted it to.

I have a small shop, but most of the tools in it are of excellent quality. I consider oars a tool as well; they are a means to get me where I want to go and to do what I want. While a good tool is often a thing of beauty, Shaw & Tenney oars are exceptional in this regard. Like any fine tool, they have a good "hand" and they perform their task with no concerns as to whether they are up to the task. When they are asked to go beyond their designed limits, they do so with grace.

I have gotten years of enjoyment from these oars and that I am looking forward to many more. My thanks go to Shaw & Tenney for keeping them available.

Straight tips in the early '80s.

Spoon tips in 2009.

From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew
(Tallahassee, Florida)

Our coast on the Gulf of Mexico is usually pretty clear of fog, except during the spring and fall. The interesting part is that it can be foggy at the coast and clear a mile inland. Or, it can be foggy inland and clear at the coast. One never knows for sure until the trip to the coast is made. One weekend we planned to go down and take the boat out. Everything was bright and sunny until we were almost to our destination. Fog! In fact, the fog stayed around until late afternoon when the tide had gone out. The next morning, it was fog again. So much for a trip on the boat. Friends who went out in a small fishing boat came back to shore using a portable GPS. Since their boat drew little water, the shoal areas around Shell Point were not a problem. As our boat draws 3' and displaces 7,200lbs, more care is needed.

Many see fog as an inconvenience. When one goes boating in a shoal area with few aids to navigation (and most of them are not lighted), staying in deep enough water while finding a channel entrance about 200' wide can become a bit tricky. Miss the entrance by just a little bit and the boat is aground. In most of our area, we go aground on sand rather than one of the many oyster bars. But, we will have to get off before we can try for the channel again. It is a bit interesting when the bow is stuck in the sand and the depth sounder on the transom shows 4' of water.

One time, before the days of the GPS, I was with friends on a keel sailboat coming into Shell Point in a fog in the late evening. We found the entrance under sail, came about to enter and planted the boat. Friends came out with a small outboard, found us, and using the main halyard for an amidship pull got the boat off the sandbar. We cranked up the outboard and followed them in the channel and they only went aground twice. When they went aground, we knew where the shallow water was and went to the deep side of their boat.

Finding a navigation aid using a GPS can have some interesting results. The source for lat/long coordinates for any navigation aid is the appropriate Light List, from which what information is needed can be extracted, which is then checked with the Local Notice to Mariners for any changes/updates. While looking at the Light List, I checked on what was given for the entrance to our channel. In addition to the light characteristics, the coordinates for the marker are given in degrees, minutes, and seconds. To wit:

Shell Point Marina Light: 30-03-04.000N, 084-15-54.000W. Of interest is that my GPS reading (about 100' to the west of the marker) gives a different set of coordinates for the Shell Point Marina Light: 30-02-49.400N, 084-17-06.780W. A sailing friend of mine reports his GPS gives the coordinates as: 30-02-56.160N, 084-17-06.900W. My chart for Apalachee Bay (#11405, 1:80,000 scale) gives the location (using plotter and divider) of: 30-03-02.000N, 084-17-00.000W. Since I use my GPS's "Go To" option to find the entrance in limited visibility, I think I will stick to what my GPS thinks is the location of the marker rather than what NOAA's table notes as the marker's location.

If you want information on some navigational aids near you, the PDF download file can be obtained for any area by going to the web page at http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/. Click on the "Light List and Corrections" option, pick your Coast Guard District, and get to the file desired. If you know the volume number of the Light List you want, you can go to http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/pdf/lightLists/LightList%20V?.pdf, where you insert the volume number where the "?" is noted (just before the ".pdf").

The Local Notice to Mariners is available by month and week and can be found at the "navcen" web site where the Light List option can be found. As noted in the above, you might want to check your GPS coordinates against what is given to make sure you are "somewhere close" to the desired mark in good weather, so you will have more faith in the use of the GPS in "not so good" weather.

At night and during times of limited visibility, a boat at anchor is supposed to show a light. Since most people operating a boat are looking ahead and not up, an anchor light at the top of a sailboat mast or high on a power boat may not be seen by the operator of a boat underway once they get close to the anchored vessel. Although not meeting the Coast Guard's requirements in most cases, I have read suggestions that installing a couple of solar powered yard lights at deck level will help show others where your boat is anchored. The idea is to have the legal anchor light lit and have additional lights shining in the dark. Most of the yard lights on sale these days are quite bright and may be additional insurance.

Oh yes, according to one collision report I read, make sure to note in the deck log when the anchor light is lit. The case in question was resolved around the entry, "anchor light lit at 1930." The owner of the boat was able to show in the boat's log that his practice was to light the anchor light at night from the past entries. For whatever reason, the boat operator did not see the lit light and collided with the anchored vessel.

The plastic (or whatever material it is) that we have in our boat's windshield has a blue tint to it these days. When it is wet, it is clear. When it is dry, the tint appears. Thinking that UV has impacted on the material, I had covers made for the windshield area. Since the fiberglass in front of the steering station on our Sisu is not that thick and most fasteners for fabric are screw type, I was wondering how the person doing the work was going to install the fasteners. He came up with a neat solution that others might find of interest. Each of the screw fasteners was "backed" with a stainless steel lock nut. The #7 screw portion of the twist stud was screwed into the nylon insert in the lock nut on the inside of the hardtop. This method provided both additional holding for the screw and protected those inside from the sharp end of the screw.

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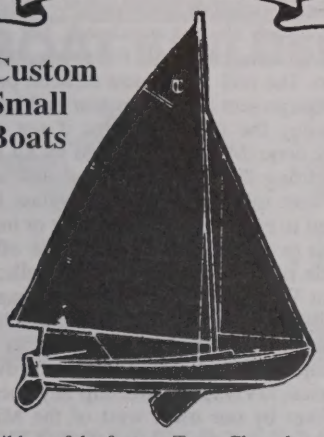

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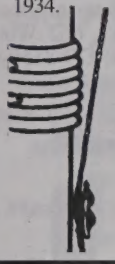

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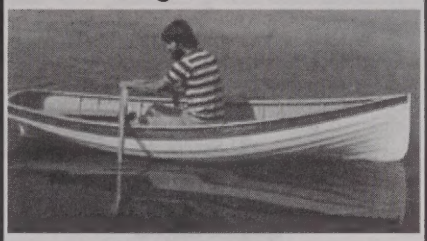

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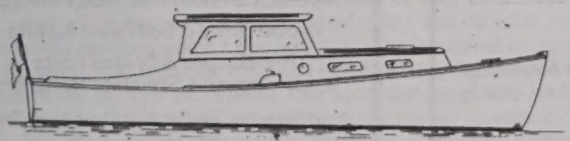

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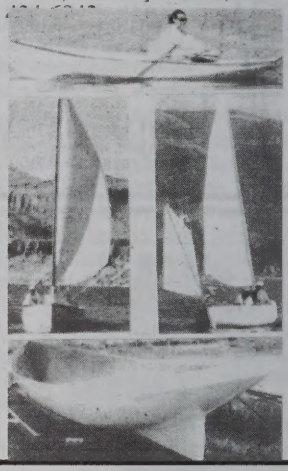

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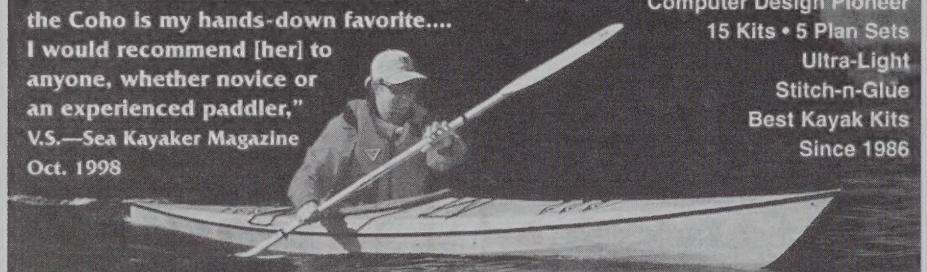

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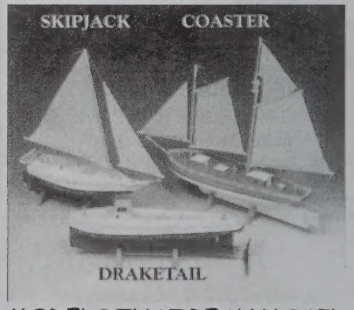

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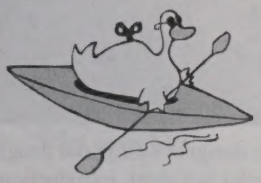

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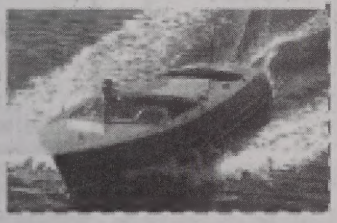

Carrying on His Work…

Ever since I launched my own boatbuilding business in 1998, Dynamite Payson and his wife Amy were always there to offer their encouragement and support to see me through my ventures. They always treated me as if I was another of their own children.

Just a few days after Dynamite had died I was called to a Payson family meeting where I was asked if I'd be interested in carrying on his work. I accepted the offer and just days after Dynamite left us I mailed out my first set of plans. Our immediate goal is to continue the fast, personal service Dynamite always gave his customers.

For the moment, business is being conducted as Dynamite always did, via checks in the mail and by voice on the telephone. By the time you read this, the H.H. Payson & Company telephone, (207) 594-7587, will be ringing here at my home. Any correspondence sent to Pleasant Beach Road, South Thomaston, will still get to me or you can write directly to H.H. Payson and Company, PO Box 122, Spruce Head, ME 04859.

Dennis Hansen

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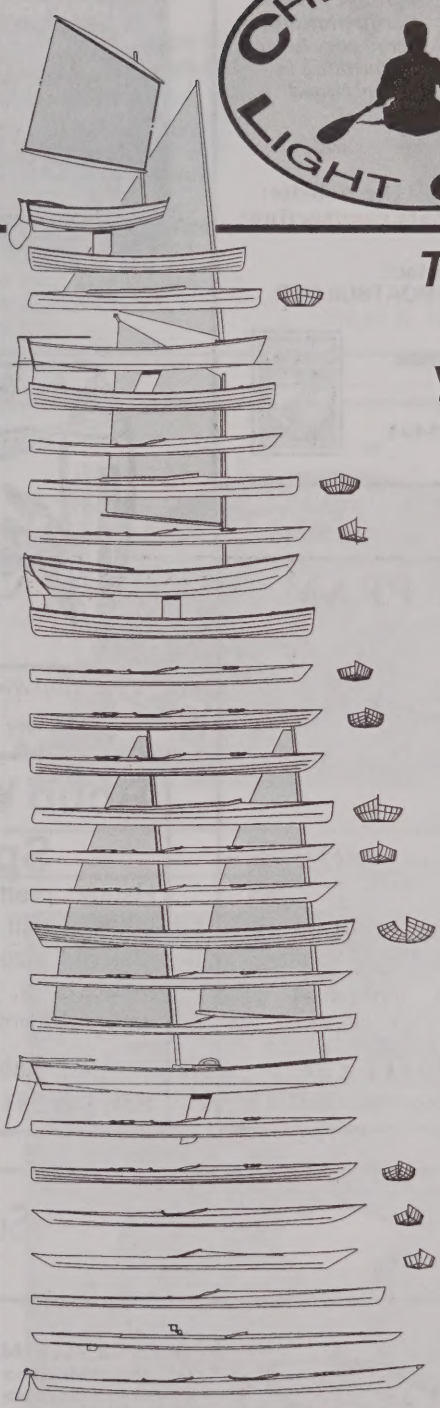

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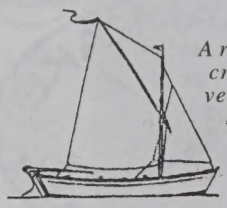

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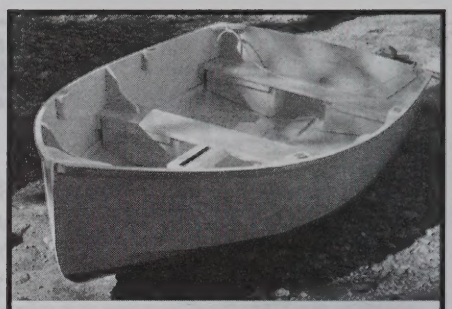

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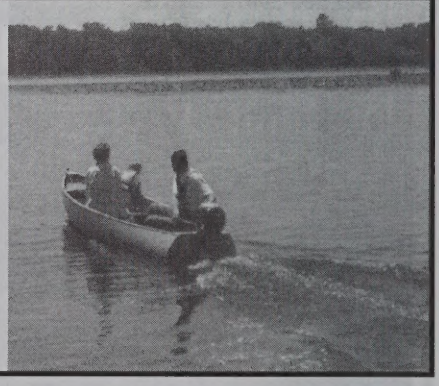

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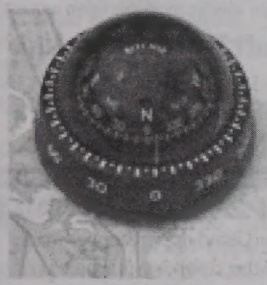

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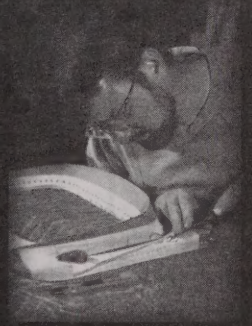

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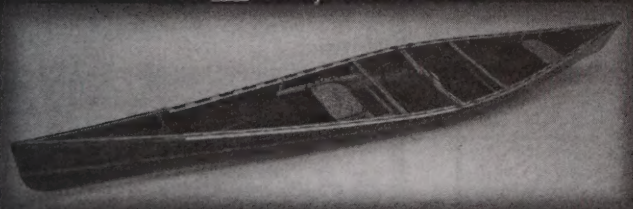

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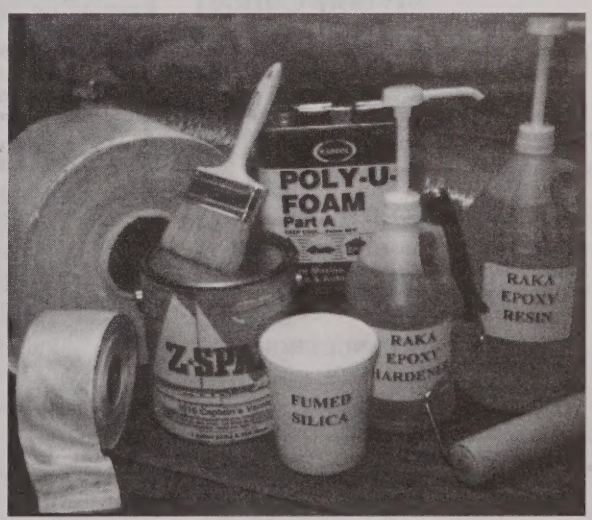

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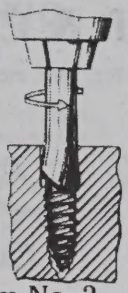

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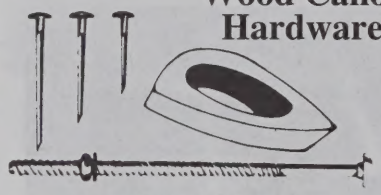

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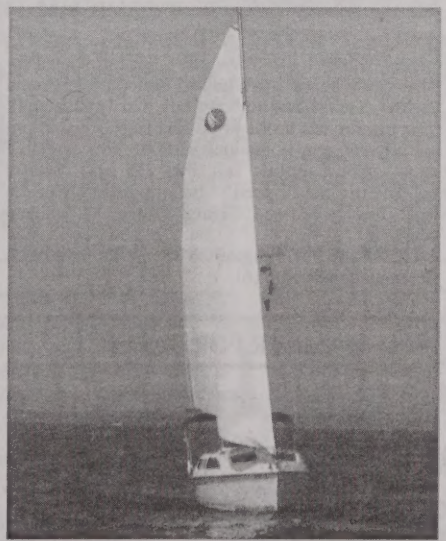

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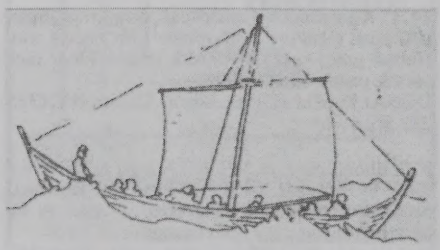

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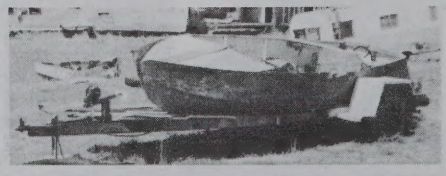
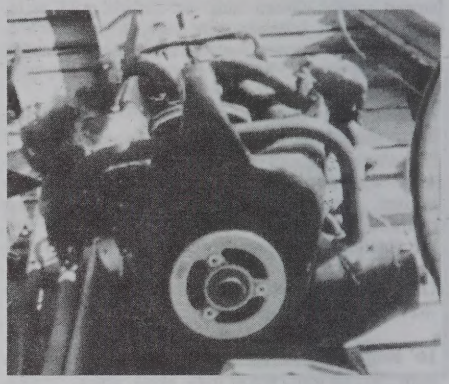
GEAR FOR SALE



Boat Trailer, used for a drag/ski boat, axle far back, big custom fenders from hay hauling use, no brakes. Worth $1,000 mebbee more for hauling hay here. B/O, FOB Helena, MT.
WILLAM C. TRUMBULL, P.O. Box 162, Ft. Harrison, MT 59636. (6)

Delta 14" Bandsaw, w/6" riser, roll-around base, 1hp 220v motor. New in '86, used for canoe & boat building. I don't do that anymore. $450 or trade for electric bass guitar & amp.
JOHN FISKE, Beverly, MA, (978) 921-5220, johnfske@comcast.net (6)

Pearl Steam Engine Company, steam launch engines, Compromise hull lines, marine boiler plans.
PEARL ENGINE CO, Sutton, VT, (802) 467-3205, www.PearlEngine.com (9)



'47 Johnson 5hp O/B, was grandfather's, last run on Puget Sound in '60s, should be okay. Free to a good home. **WWII B-17 V-2 Starter Motor,** last run in '90s. Free to a good home for someone to put into a classy wooden boat hopefully in B-17 country around Puget Sound, more for display than for use. Neither to be resold for profit. FOB Helena, MT (6) jpg
WILLAM C. TRUMBULL, P.O. Box 162, Ft. Harrison, MT 59636. (6)

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Shiver Me Timbers

By: Robert L. Summers

Aaah, the Cost... The Cost

I HAVE TAKEN A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF TIME OFF WORK TO PREPARE THIS CRAFT FOR BOATING SEASON...
...I HAVE ASKED FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ALL KINDS OF FAVORS IN ORDER TO PURSUE MY PASSION FOR SAILING....
...I HAVE BORROWED MONEY TO PAY FOR A FIRST OFFICER AND SEVEN CREW MEMBERS....
WELL, ROB PETER TO PAY PAUL, YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE THE SUPPORT OF PAUL!
SO, HOW MUCH DID HE OFFER FOR YOUR BOAT?
ELEVEN FIVE....
HMMM, A TASKER MAINSAIL, RITCHIE COMPASS, KNOTMETER, DEPTH SOUNDER, AUTO-PILOT REFURBISHED GALLEY, NEW BATTERY...
...I WOULD HATE TO SEE SOMEONE TAKE ADVANTAGE, BUT BOATS EQUIPPED LIKE YOURS USUALLY SELL FOR TWICE AS MUCH....
...IT'S NICE TO HEAR THE OPINIONS OF PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT CHECK WRITERS!
MAGIE
AS SOON AS THE BIG STORM WAS OVER, I RUSHED TO OUR MARINA AND CHECKED FOR DAMAGE....
...WHEN I GOT THERE I FELT A NUMBNESS THEN PAIN AND PRESSURE IN MY CHEST....
!
...SUDDENLY I BECAME LIGHT-HEADED, NAUSEOUS, WITH A SHORTNESS OF BREATH....
SO, HOW WAS YOUR BOAT?...
EVERYTHING HAS TO LAST BECAUSE FINANCIALLY WE CANNOT AFFORD TO REPLACE ANYTHING....
...KEEL BECOMES DAMAGED, THAT'S IT, BOOM OR MAST GETS BROKEN, THAT'S IT, LOSE AN OAR, THAT'S IT....
... BATTERY GOES, BILDGE PUMP GOES, GYROPILOT, RADAR, MARINE RADIO GO, THAT'S IT....
RS
...WIFE GOES, THAT'S IT!

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